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ABSTRACT

This volume contains descriptions of programs for student success and retention at 68 state colleges and universities in the United States. Each institution is a participant in the National Retention Project, a research-based project working within broader campus cultures that are committed to providing access and success to students traditionally underrepresented in American higher education. The one-to-two-page program descriptions are arranged alphabetically by the name of the college. The programs are characterized by strategies which facilitate student success, such as: a student-centered philosophy, early intervention, routine faculty and student assessment, intrusive advising, involvement of faculty as well as senior administrators, and required orientation for new and transfer students. The volume contains a list of the members of the Sallie Mae National Retention Advisory Panel, a list of conferences and participants, and an 88-item bibliography of resources on student retention in higher education. (JB)

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Campus Practices for Student Success:
A Compendium of Model Programs

HE 028 133

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Introduction

Based on data from the annual retention survey administered by AASCU with funding from Sallie Mae, each year 35–40 presidents are invited to join the National Retention Project. One of the conditions of the invitation is that presidents must agree to bring a campus team comprised of vice presidents for academic and student affairs, faculty leaders, equity officers, and institutional research officers to one of three regional retention conferences. Once program themes are established for the regional conferences by host institutions and the project's National Advisory Panel, project participants are encouraged to submit proposals for presentations at the regional conference they will attend. The showcasing of campus practices in this way provides an opportunity for all who attend the conferences to learn more about institutionalizing opportunities for access and success at state colleges.

Many of those presentations have been condensed and included in this publication. The goal of a publication like this one is to encourage the sharing of information about campus practices (orientation programs for new students, student tracking systems, presidential leadership, faculty and staff development programs, classroom research) that positively affect student success.

The 1994 regional retention conferences would not have been possible without the enthusiastic leadership from the presidents and campus teams at the host institutions, Eastern Connecticut State University, Portland State University (Ore.) and Ball State University (Ind.).

Soon AASCU will have in place a retention model programs database to further project dissemination efforts. Your completion of the 1994 Retention Survey will expedite the process and we appreciate your participation.

The National Retention Project, a research–based project, focuses on institutional capacity as the unit of analysis rather than on student behavior. While many of the campus practices summarized in this publication may be similar to existing programs on your campuses, their overall fit with their campus' culture, however, are noteworthy. In this context campus culture is defined as those shared values, administrative structures and processes that affect campus successes in improved retention and graduation rates. Our research data show that the fit of retention programs to the broader campus culture is what makes the difference in a campus's capacity to retain students to graduation.

When this publication was compiled, there were 76 schools involved in the project. About half of the group were featured in an earlier publication, *Directory of Model Programs*. More than 50 of the summaries of campus practices are appearing here for the first time. Individuals actively involved in their campus' retention efforts from 75 schools are included in the 1994 Spring Conferences Participants list. For more details on programs included, you may contact campus team members. For additional copies of this publication to share with colleagues on you campus, you may contact AASCU.

It is our hope that the publication will offer new ways to assess how existing programs contribute to campus climate and administrative conditions aimed at promoting student success. Given the complexities at most institutions, each year care is taken to select schools representative of the AASCU membership, urban and rural, commuter and residential, open admissions and selective admissions.

Even with the different institutional types represented in this publication, you will see certain common structural and process elements for facilitating student success: a student– centered philosophy, early intervention, routine faculty and

student assessment, intrusive advising, involvement of faculty as well as senior administrators, and required orientation for new and transfer students. The "model" programs shared here point to the overall effort made by a campus and are included in this publication because of their institutional fit within a broader campus culture committed to providing access and success to students traditionally underrepresented in American higher education. We hope the publication will facilitate additional discussion at your campuses around the topic, student access and success.

Adams State College

Alamosa, Colorado

Adams State College has many retention activities. Each incoming freshman receives specialized advising by faculty members or through the Academic Advisement Center.

Orientation and career planning are mandated for all freshmen. Each freshman begins development through the established four-year model. A first-year course on success psychology covers a variety of retention issues.

Specialized tutorial assistance in any academic area is available. Counseling assistance specializes in relationship problems, adjustment issues and minor emotional conditions.

Upperclass student mentors are assigned to every freshman who requests one. Discussions focus on ASC services, resource management, financial planning and time management.

The Early Alert System identifies potential problems—academic, personal, interpersonal or emotional. All faculty have access to the system to identify students needing extra attention, personally or academically.

If mid-term grade reports are low, the academic advisor, mentor or dean of Student Affairs responds to student's need for corrective action.

The college has a semester-to-semester tracking system to determine persistence. This is an eight-year followup of individual student persistence that demonstrates the degree of achievement of the educational plan and overall retention and graduation rates. An attrition/retention committee evaluates results.

Alcorn State University

Lorman, Mississippi

Alcorn State University is the oldest historically black land-grant university in the United States. It is a co-educational, liberal arts, science and teacher education public institution offering programs leading to associate (nursing only), baccalaureate, master's and educational specialist degrees.

Historical data indicate that a large number of students with deficiencies attend historically black institutions such as Alcorn. According to the results of retention studies (both external and internal), these students have and will continue to experience academic difficulties without some kind of academic intervention. Alcorn began to focus on developing and implementing retention activities and this resulted in a retention model which helped to improve the chances that these students experience academic success.

The establishment of the General College of Excellence (GCE) was the first step the university took towards developing and implementing retention activities. This college is managed by a dean who is responsible for ensuring the effective and efficient coordination of all operational programs, activities and services, as well as the evaluation of the program. A goal of the GCE is to develop and implement developmental and general education core curricula, and academic support services that will remedy, enhance and provide students with a sound general education. These curricula will ultimately provide students with the fundamental skills and knowledge necessary to experience success at the upper levels or in their chosen area. The GCE is the entry point for all undergraduate students at the university. The

composition of the student body ranges from academically talented to low academic achievers.

An operational structure is instituted to ensure success of the General College. Included in this structure are those programs (e.g. Special Programs, Learning Skills Center, and Counseling and Testing) that are fulfilling functions related directly to the mission of the General College.

Retention activities at Alcorn include a review of the previous academic record, placement, academic advisement, and close monitoring of academic progression. The student's academic progression is monitored until the student successfully completes the general education core requirement of 54 credits.

The first phase of retention activities involves reviewing students' high school academic record. Special attention is given to courses taken, grades earned, and performance levels on the American College Test (ACT). The ACT subtest scores are used to determine placement. Students scoring below 18 on the English, mathematics and reading subtests are required to enroll in appropriate developmental courses. Scores below these levels have been determined to be performing at less than grade 12.5 level. Developmental courses are designed to correctly identify deficiencies of students, preparing them for college-level coursework.

Developmental courses at Alcorn are competency based. A student must successfully complete a task as a prerequisite before moving to the next task. To exit a developmental course, a student must demonstrate a mastery of course content at a minimum 70 percent proficiency level. This determination is made based on frequent student assessment during the course. A standardized assessment measure for measuring student achievement is also employed to exit developmental courses.

The next phase involves enrollment in regular college-level courses. The concept of mastery learning serves as the basis for all instruction under the sponsorship of the General College. Mastery of course content and skills are required to successfully complete the course. Similar requirements for mastery of each unit, phase, etc., within the structure of the course and the concept of sequential learning are emphasized. All phases of instruction include a computer-assisted instruction component and tutors to enhance the instructional process. The computer lab coordinators (in reading, mathematics and English), work in collaboration with faculty and students to determine areas where improvement is necessary.

An essential component of Alcorn's retention activities is the academic advisor. Orientation sessions are held with advisors to ensure their understanding of the purposes, goals, objectives, programs, services and student requirements that exist within the General College. Every effort is made to assign students advisors in their major field of study. Academic advisors are the first people students meet where one-on-one interaction takes place regarding their academic matriculation. At Alcorn, the academic advisors are faculty from various disciplines. Faculty selected as advisors are highly motivated and sensitive to the developmental needs and problems of this population of students. Additionally, those who are trained and/or receptive to special training related to working with such students are selected. Because instruction is competency-based, it is imperative that the student's academic progression is closely monitored; this is done by academic advisors until completion of the general education core curriculum.

Both the formative and summary evaluations are used to evaluate the effectiveness of the program. Upon completion of the general education core, students must write a sophomore exit examination which tests their knowledge of general education. The results are used in conjunction with other evaluative

measures to determine if the goals and objectives of the program are being achieved. Other evaluative measures include formal student evaluation of instruction, accrediting agencies' findings, and summary reports from task force committees. Revisions in curricula and the program may be made based on these findings.

Appalachian State University

Boone, North Carolina

Appalachian State University is located in the town of Boone in the Appalachian mountains of North Carolina. As one of the 16-member institutions of the consolidated University of North Carolina System, it is a coeducational, four-year university offering bachelor's, master's, specialist's and doctoral degrees in a variety of fields.

The mission of the university includes a strong commitment to excellence in instruction, as well as to its tradition of attention to the individual needs of students. To accomplish this mission, the Learning Assistance Program (LAP) has been developed to provide opportunities for academic and personal growth. The LAP is committed to the philosophy that, given adequate support, services, time and appropriate teaching strategies, all admitted students can successfully complete college level work and become independent, self-directed learners. The LAP is nationally recognized as an outstanding academic support program, having received the John Champaigne Award for Outstanding Developmental Programs from the National Association for Developmental Education.

The services of LAP are available to a diverse constituency, with primary emphasis placed on meeting the needs of students considered "at risk" in the college environment. Traditionally included in this group are economically and educationally disadvantaged students; disabled, non-traditional and underprepared students; minorities; and student-athletes. However, services are not limited to these groups, and the LAP actively provides support to all students experiencing difficulty in achieving their potential. High school students accepted into the federally funded Upward Bound Program also receive support through the program in preparation for a successful transition to college. Additionally, faculty members may use the academic support services of LAP to supplement their classroom instruction by referring students to the program. This service to faculty also includes consultation on students' needs, supplementary educational materials and additional academic support services.

The Learning Assistance Program reports to the director of the General Studies Program. Annual reports are submitted to the U.S. Department of Education which partially funds some components of the program, to the University of North Carolina General Administration, and to the National Collegiate Athletic Association.

Services for the general student population include programs such as University Tutorial Services, Supplemental Instruction, Learning Skills Courses, and Outreach Workshops.

- University Tutorial Services provides tutorials in general education courses for all students. Tutors in the program are juniors and seniors with As or Bs in the courses they tutor, recommended by their professors, and carefully interviewed by a tutor coordinator. Tutoring services are available to those experiencing difficulty

in passing a course, as well as to those who may wish to improve their grades. Outreach tutoring services are coordinated by the program in the math, chemistry and accounting departments.

- Supplemental Instruction (SI) is based on a national model developed at the University of Missouri. The program assists students in mastering course concepts while increasing their competency in reading, reasoning and study skills. To accomplish this competency, "model students" e.g., graduate students and upperclassmen, attend course lectures and schedule and conduct three or four 50-minute SI sessions each week at times convenient to the majority of students in the course. This is the fourth year of this successful program, and SI sessions are now offered in the departments of history, biology and physics.

- The Learning Skills courses taught through the LAP acquaint students with methods and motivation for learning and success, especially in the academic setting. Emphasis is placed on academic skills and techniques, including organizational and research methods necessary for writing papers and making oral presentations. There are plans to expand the number of course offerings as the need arises.

- Outreach Workshops on academic skills necessary for success in college are offered campuswide by the LAP in conjunction with Residence Life, Career Planning and Employment, Counseling and Psychological Services, and the Wellness Center. Test taking, note taking, time management, test anxiety, and concentration techniques are some of the topics presented in recent years. This is a model program which exemplifies a successful partnership between Academic Affairs and Student Development. Another function of the LAP is to provide increased specialized academic support services for five special student populations, learning disabled and other disabled students, student-athletes, low-income, disadvantaged high school and college students, and nontraditional or older adult students. Each program has a coordinator who is responsible for its day-to-day operation.

A brief description of each program follows.

- Learning Disability/Disabled Student Services. For students in this category, special support is often needed if their college experience is to be successful. The program provides assistance in achieving educational goals through support services personalized to meet the individual student's needs. There is a commitment to giving the disabled college student every opportunity to be successful, and to this end, several special student services are available including counseling, tutoring, career exploration, and self-concept building. Students are admitted through the regular admissions procedure and many use special administration of the SAT.

- Student Support Services is a federally-funded program that assists ASU students who have potential for academic success but are being hampered by academic difficulties resulting from low-income or first generation college backgrounds. Academic and counseling support services are offered to "qualified" and "at-risk" students in the college population. These services take various forms such as instruction in alternative learning styles while teaching students how to learn in

the traditional learning style. In short, the student is taught to become an independent and successful learner.

- Academic Services for Student-Athletes. Because the university puts equivalent value on academic excellence and athletic achievements, and insists that the individual be first a student and second an athlete, the student-athlete is provided a comprehensive academic support system. This system makes available, to both scholarship and non-scholarship athletes, services similar to those offered in the Student Support Services and Learning Disability programs. Each semester, faculty are requested to complete academic progress reports to ensure accurate and appropriate academic advising.

- Upward Bound is a federally-funded program providing services to low-income, first-generation high school students. Yearly, there are approximately 65-75 student participants from area high schools who share the program's goals of improving academic performance, motivation levels and self-confidence to ensure graduation from high school and successful entry into college. Counseling and personal growth opportunities help these student participants to build self-confidence and self-esteem through academic skills development and support, as well as through social and cultural enrichment. The opportunity to attend college is realized for students who would otherwise view it as an unachievable goal. Consisting of an academic year as well as a summer component, the program received a national award as a model for its mathematics instruction.

- Services for Returning Adult Students. Adult students often need special assistance. The Adult Student Network, under the sponsorship of the LAP, acquaints returning adult students with campus resources and facilitates meetings where ideas on advice, support and socialization are exchanged. The advisor for the Adult Student Network is the coordinator of adult student services. The mission is to assist adult students reach their individual educational goals through access to the total university community. Students are kept informed via a monthly newsletter, and the network receives financial and moral support from the LAP.

Ball State University

Muncie, Indiana

Ball State University's mission is to be a premiere teaching university. This underscores its emphasis on the quality of its students' educational experiences. The university has reaffirmed its traditional emphasis on teaching and learning while inaugurating new structures, programs and strategies to improve academic achievement. The president has been strong, clear and consistent in articulating a mission in which retention is not the goal but is the outcome of educational quality.

The University College, an academic unit, houses Academic Advising, the Learning Center and the Center for Teaching and Learning. These offices provide developmental academic advising for all freshmen and offer comprehensive academic support services, which include peer tutoring, supplemental instruction and career exploration to all students. They also help faculty improve teaching skills and strategies. The programs focus on first-year students, teaching and learning in the General Studies curriculum and on the application of technology to teaching.

Collaboration between the divisions of academic and student affairs characterizes the university's retention efforts. A Freshman Year Experience Committee of faculty and administrators promotes policy and reviews practice related to first-year students. University College sponsors programs for access and equity for underprepared matriculated students, for freshmen on academic probation, for nontraditional students and for intercollegiate athletes who rely on the integrated efforts of the activities associated with

- advising,
- the Learning Center,
- residential life,
- admissions,
- the registrar's office,
- career services, and
- the faculty.

The offices of Institutional Research and Academic Assessment, Analytical Studies, and the Student Affairs research group provide opportunities to study retention trends, assess learning outcomes and student satisfaction, help students monitor their academic progress, and learn about students' goals, plans and aspirations.

Bowie State University

Bowie, Maryland

Bowie State University incorporates academic advising, personal counseling, developmental education and extracurricular programs in its efforts to increase student retention and graduation rates. Retention activities and programs rely on these methods in combination rather than isolation. The strategies include focusing on academic experiences (upper and lower divisions) and institutional accountability.

The University College of Excellence (UCE) is being developed by the university community as a comprehensive, campus–wide program for all freshman and sophomore students. Earlier retention activities and programs are being incorporated in this experience. This program restructures the traditional freshman and sophomore years into a more holistic developmental experience. A pilot program with limited enrollment monitored by a UCE assessment director is planned for the fall of 1994. The University College of Excellence requires the restructuring of the general studies program, redesigning courses around interdisciplinary themes. It also involves faculty and peer mentoring of "learning teams," career seminars, academic support programs, and a new Freshman Seminar. All freshmen, both residential and commuter, will be involved in the total university experience. Existing laboratories, especially those using technology, will be required components of the experience, as will volunteer service to the university, the community and the region. By beginning the UCE experience with a director of assessment, the university demonstrates its determination both to be accountable and to conduct on–going research on the teaching–learning process as well as on effective retention strategies.

The STEPP Laboratory assists prospective teachers meet Maryland state requirements on the National Teachers' Examination (NTE), which helps the university meet retention/graduation goals. The laboratory helps students improve their test-taking skills, provides opportunities for students to take examinations similar to the NTE, interprets scores on examinations similar to the NTE, and provides tutorial assistance to help students succeed on the English Proficiency Examination and the Pre-Professional Skills Test (PPST), examinations which test basic skills. Most of the assistance provided in the STEPP Lab is computerized. Data collected since spring 1986 suggest that the STEPP Laboratory has had a significant impact on the performance of project participants on the NTE. In the spring 1987 semester, 64 percent of the students passed the communications skills, 73 percent passed the general knowledge component, and 55 percent passed the professional knowledge component. Comparable data for the spring 1992 semester were 96 percent, 94 percent and 92 percent respectively.

The Summer Emerging Scholars Program is a residential pre-college experience for students not admissible to Bowie State University by its regular admissions criteria. In four years of operation, 217 students have participated in the program. Approximately 80 percent of the admitted Emerging Scholars are still academically eligible to be enrolled in the university, a retention rate significantly higher than that of their classification peers. The program combines intensive remediation with academic and personal counseling and academic enrichment.

The Counseling and Student Development Center's retention efforts include workshops and seminars on personal, social and psychological issues including such topics as "Working Through Grief," "Male/Female Relationships," "Stress Reduction," and "Alternative Lifestyles." In addition, the center coordinates the one-credit "Orientation to College Life."

Federal Support Programs

Together, the Student Special Support Services Program and the federal Stay-in-School Program are used by the university as retention supports. The academic support needs of low-income, first-generation college students are served by the Student Special Support Service Program while the federal Stay-in-School program enables students who demonstrate financial need to earn money to help finance their education and increase their persistence toward graduation.

The Mathematics Tutorial Center is staffed by a full-time director and student tutors, and is open to all students. The center addresses mathematics at every level from developmental math through calculus.

The Computer Science Club assists students on all levels from basic computer usage and programming to complex problem-solving. Supervisors are graduate and undergraduate students, and the club serves as a minority student research center. Beginning in fall 1994, students in the basic computer science courses will be required to participate in the Computer Science Club.

Graduate assistants and tutors are employed by the university and assigned to the computer laboratory. Tutors have been hired especially to work with freshmen and sophomores.

Seminar Series

The computer science area conducts a seminar series which attracts distinguished speakers. There is an active student chapter of the Association of Computing Machinery (ACM), which organizes seminars and tutorials and provides peer

tutoring for computer science students. The tutorials provide a comprehensive view of trends in computer science and encourage the exploration of career possibilities.

Co–op Education

This is a valuable vehicle for both recruitment and retention purposes. Students from the department of natural sciences, mathematics and computer science are encouraged to participate in co–op placements with such federal agencies and departments as Energy, Defense, Environmental Protection, Treasury, Fish and Wildlife, Social Security, Aviation, Forest Service, and the National Security Administration.

California Maritime Academy

Vallejo, California

The retention rate for California Maritime Academy has been well over 70 percent for first time freshmen, but in recent years, the rate of retention for first time freshmen has fallen to around 65 percent. The academy is taking steps to improve this rate.

The academy is small and offers four majors, one of which must be selected before admission. Change of majors is allowed within the first year, though this is not common. Students are required to wear a uniform and live on campus. The college can boast normally strong placement opportunities at graduation. Because of these opportunities, very few of the academy graduates elect to go directly into graduate school after graduation, but usually do so several years after.

Because the college is small, classes are small and students get more attention from faculty and tutors. Students generally have a career goal at completion.

Factors of retention that are controlled by the academy, although not necessarily aimed at retention of students:

- Each student is part of a disciplined environment and is assigned into a division, which is made up of other students of the same major. Students within the division become very close, almost as if they were in a fraternity or sorority. Students, who must live on campus, reside on campus by these same divisions. The result of this close living leads students to support each other academically and emotionally.

- Mandatory class attendance leads to a lower rate of academic failure.

- All students must meet with an advisor before registering for classes. This mandatory contact seems to lead to more informal contact throughout the year between student and advisor. In many cases the advisor becomes a personal advisor as well as an academic advisor.

Specific efforts by the academy to retain students:

- Students who plan on leaving must check out of the academy. This check out includes meeting with a member of the counseling staff and the associate academic dean to determine why they are leaving and if they've considered all

options. Approximately 5 percent of students intending to leave change their minds and stay, in most cases remaining to graduation.

- Approximately six months after a student leaves the academy a questionnaire is mailed to determine why the student left and to suggest that he or she complete her or his studies instead.

- The college has an evening tutoring program available for students. Services are offered from 7 until 10 p.m. each weekday evening in a convenient location. The tutor is a qualified teacher, hired for this purpose alone.

- The retention of traditionally underrepresented students, including women, has never been as high as with Caucasian male students. To address this problem, the college opened a Minority Engineering Program Center, funded with private and state funds. The center opened in the fall of 1992. Mathematics and science workshops, academic and financial aid advising, and preadmission campus visitation opportunities for prospective underrepresented students are provided by the center. Since its inception there has been a higher rate of retention of most underrepresented groups.

California Polytechnic State University

San Luis Opispo, California

Through its University Outreach Services Program, California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo targets high-achieving high school and community college prospects for admission. Recruitment efforts include school visits, direct mail, on-campus programs and tours, media (publications, video, correspondence) and pre-enrollment advisement and outreach.

The Admissions Office uses data from a supplementary questionnaire (a multicriteria analysis based on academic preparation), GPA and test scores to determine admissions. Selected applicants are sent information on housing and financial aid.

START is an orientation program that brings new students and their parents to campus in the summer for two-day sessions on testing, academic advisement, on-line TouchTone class registration and residence life experiences. The Summer Institute provides new students from underrepresented groups an exciting summer "mini-quarter," which includes four to six units of course work and campus life experience.

The week before classes begin new students and parents are treated to an extensive orientation program focused on social issues, adjustment to campus life and preparation for academic success. In selected majors students may enroll for "survival and success" courses related to their disciplines.

University and college-specific programs are available to provide academic and personal support. They include the Learning Center, college advisement centers, psychological services, personal finance management, tutorial assistance, clubs and recreation, health and wellness seminars, multicultural programming, disabled student services and advanced learning technologies. Students ready for graduation are prepared for career planning, resume development, interviewing skills, networking and graduate school tests.

The university's interactive student data base allows faculty and staff to access student records to perform assessments and evaluations and write specific programs to extract reports, conduct studies and evaluate programs.

California State Polytechnic University, Pomona

Pomona, California

The university has established College of Arts Retention and Enhancement Services (CARES), a college-based educational equity program for underrepresented minority students who have declared a major in the College of Arts. The purpose of the program is to provide students with the support services needed to succeed in college life and a future career.

Students enrolled in CARES may take advantage of the following services and programs:

- Faculty mentors to assist with academic planning and support services
- Career mentors to assist with career decisions
- Mentoring class, which provides students with mentoring opportunities
- Free tutoring for most academic courses
- Workshops with speakers/facilitators on a variety of relevant topics
- Social activities to provide interaction with peers and faculty
- College-based programs newsletter about important people, events and dates
- Financial aid information form a database of scholarship and financial aid opportunities

These supportive services and programs, staffed by trained professionals and carefully selected peers, provide CARES participants with relevant and substantive support to help ensure retention, graduation and a successful career.

California State University, Northridge

Northridge, California

Creating a student-centered campus is a goal of California State University, Northridge. After many discussions about attrition and retention rates, progress towards graduation, graduation rates and campus climate, it became clear that any attempt at enrollment management had to focus on the congruence among our students, our faculty, and our academic programs. We also recognized that retention is environmental. No one unit on campus alone can be responsible for retention, but that retention results from a climate of caring, a recognition of expectations, and providing support services for students. A quality academic advising program was identified as necessary for assuring that the skills, abilities, interests, and needs of the students were matched with the appropriate academic programs.

The *Student Success Program* was created to coordinate first-time freshman students' academic advising, placement into appropriate academic courses, early registration, academic support, other university services, and orientation. Charac-

teristics of this program are: timely identification of enrollees; early academic advising and registration privileges; required individualized academic advising sessions that focus on students' academic skills, abilities, and interests, culminating in the students' registration into classes; required enrollment in the designated writing and mathematics course; enrollment in courses appropriate for first-time freshmen; availability of information on academic assistance programs and other student services; required orientation that will focus on campus life and student skills for learning such as time management and note taking skills.

Timely Contact

When a student is admitted to CSUN, a welcoming letter from the provost enclosing a postcard to establish an advising appointment is sent. The return postcard generates a call from the Advising Resource Center to schedule an advising appointment. The advisement takes place centrally in the Advising Resource Center for undeclared students, and in most of the academic schools for students with majors.

Early Academic Advising and Registration

First-time freshmen are required to meet with an advisor before access to registration is granted. Advising and registration are scheduled prior to the beginning of registration for continuing students. Advising is one-to-one, giving the advisor ample time to look at the student's academic history and listen to the student's goals.

Placement into Classes

Students are required to enroll in the writing and mathematics courses determined by their individual placement scores. Courses have been identified by the academic departments which are appropriate for first-time freshmen and advisors who are suggesting appropriate courses.

Academic Assistance and Student Services

During the advising session students are referred to the academic support services that will enhance their classroom instruction. These services include individual and group tutoring sessions, laboratory experiences, self-paced modules and supplemental instruction opportunities. The Counseling Center offers workshops on decision making, procrastination and self esteem that have had effective results with students. The Career Center provides students with various opportunities to explore and experience the world of work.

Orientation

First-time freshmen are brought to campus for two days the week prior to the beginning of school. Special activities focusing on such issues as diversity, wellness, homophobia and tolerance are presented in addition to the normal tours of the campus, and general information sessions. The Orientation Program is mandatory.

Monitoring

Review of Advisement vs. Registration. Weekly registration reports are examined to verify that students are correctly placed into the writing and math courses and that the other courses are appropriate to the students' majors at the correct level. Students are contacted if changes need to occur.

Testing Requirements. Students who had not completed the testing requirements at the time of advising will be held to completing that requirement during fall and summer, and failure to do so will result in a hold on their spring registration. This is a State of California requirement.

Mid-Term Grades. Evaluations in the writing and math courses will be available at mid-term to identify those students who are in need of additional academic support. These students will be contacted and an appraisal of the student's situation will occur. Appropriate remedies will be recommended.

Spring Semester Advising. Advising for the spring semester is mandatory. Students meet with their advisors to plan their spring schedules in preparation for registration. Students in developmental writing and mathematics courses are required to continue in the sequence until the college-level requirement is completed. This advising session will also address planning for the end of the semester, including the timely submission of term papers or projects and preparation for finals.

End of Semester Grades. Semester grades and academic actions are reviewed and each student receives a letter of information about their particular situation. Students on probation are placed on an Academic Performance Agreement determined between the advisor and the student.

Assessment

Assessment of the *Student Success Program* consists of administering survey instruments to students, faculty and support staff; a review of data compiled on GPA, academic status, continuation rates, unit loads, and refined by looking at special populations of students, class level, gender and traffic logs of student services.

California State University, Sacramento

Sacramento, California

Inherent in its mission statement are two of the main goals of CSU-Sacramento; building a multicultural university and achieving diversity. The university hopes to achieve these goals by retaining and assisting an ethnically and culturally diverse student population in achieving success at the university level. The university's programs focus on underrepresented students who often have been challenged by insufficient high school preparation and economic and institutional barriers.

The university has a strong policy on academic advising. In addition to the Advising Center, all faculty are given the responsibility of advising students. The Academic Achievement Center, in conjunction with the Advising Center, advises those who have not yet declared majors and monitors those who are on academic action.

CSUS is committed to providing the opportunity, atmosphere and conditions under which students can complete their bachelor's degree in four years. To assist freshman students especially in achieving this goal, the university is implementing The CSUS Pledge: Graduate in Four Years Program. Those who take "the pledge" participate in the General Education clustering pilot program and student retention programs. They also receive special advising and assistance in planning their overall program and in setting and reaching their goals. The primary purpose of the program is to assist entering freshmen graduate in four years.

The Educational Opportunity Program (EOP) is one of several valuable tools in the retention machinery at CSUS. Under this program, students who have experienced economic and educational barriers to higher education are assessed and provided with special admission and retention services such as peer advising, advocacy, individual tutoring, workshops and strategies of learning courses. Through counselors, this program also helps students adjust to the university setting, as well as provides grants for those who are eligible.

The Learning Skills Center works closely with EOP and offers a variety of programs including self-instructional labs, tutorial assistance, workshops and courses in reading, study skills, mathematics and English language development for those who speak English as a second language. Workshop topics cover various subjects such as math learning strategies, memory and concentration, test-taking, reading speed improvement, and textbook reading. The center's staff includes a learning disabilities specialist who is available for individual diagnostic testing, advising and development of educational plans for overcoming learning disabilities.

Specialized assistance under CSUS' Educational Equity Programs focuses on retention efforts for underrepresented students. These efforts include mentoring programs, adjunct classes, assistance for specialized majors (engineering, business and science) and groups (migrant farm workers), and summer programs for entering freshmen.

The Faculty/Peer Mentor Program links underrepresented ethnic students, especially second-year students in academic difficulty, to both a faculty member and an upper-division peer mentor. The faculty mentor provides guidance and information on requirements for graduation, academic planning, career opportunities, resources and support services such as financial aid, counseling, tutoring/study sessions, adjunct courses, cultural and social activities, as well as clubs and professional organizations. Adjunct courses/classes provide reinforcement to what students have learned in class, offer tutorial assistance, as well as assistance with learning efficiency and test performance. Student participants in adjunct classes have demonstrated improved academic achievement and retention in general education classes.

The Minority Engineering Program (MEP) is one of CSUS' most successful discipline-based educational equity programs, and provides an on-campus "home" for its members. A large, 24-hour-a-day study center/computer lab is the site for academic excellence workshops, tutoring, study groups and a camaraderie that comes from participation in student-run professional societies. The program has received national acclaim for its high retention rates, and those students who participate tend to increase their probability of graduating and achieving success. There has been a tenfold increase in minority graduates from this program in the last 10 years, from three minority graduates in 1984 to 50 per year in 1994. In 1990, the program director received the National Association of Minority Program Administrators Award.

The MEP offers scholarships, part-time and summer job referrals, a freshman orientation course, academic advising, class clustering in which MEP students take the same classes and organize study sessions together, as well as co-op placements.

Project Success assists students in the MEP with financial support as well as helps them to develop the skills, knowledge and ability to succeed in the workforce. Project Success Industry Fellows are offered full-time, paid internships during summers and school breaks from freshman through senior years, as well as upper

division co-op opportunities. Their earned income, together with financial aid, allows them to attend school full-time, eliminating the need to work once classes are in session. The first 22 Project Success Scholars began their internships in June 1991; during the 1992-93 academic year over 40 students participated in Project Success. To date, total financial assistance to MEP students amounts to more than $2 million.

The Minority Enrichment Business Program (MEBP) encourages and supports African American, Chicano, Hispanic, Native American, Filipino and Pacific Islander students who major in business. The MEBP Professional Development and Career Management Course (OBE 9) matches each student's skills and values with career options. Faculty advisers in this program offer academic and career advising and guidance. Tutoring and study groups are available to all. The program also provides summer job searches and internships.

The Science Educational Equity (SEE) program is directed at underrepresented minorities who have an interest in a health profession or science career. Weekly individual or group study sessions are available for most science courses in addition to adjunct courses in such science subjects as biology, chemistry and physics. The science faculty provide individual academic advising, career guidance and assistance with course scheduling to all SEE students. Students participate in professional conferences, skill seminars and summer enrichment programs. In addition to academic services, the program also provides opportunities for students to meet and interact with faculty in an informal setting through a book club, field trips and barbecues.

The College Assistance Migrant Program (CAMP) has received national acclaim for its high retention rates. It is an outreach transitional education program for students from migrant or seasonal farm worker backgrounds. This program assists students in making the transition to college life, and offers special admission, assistance with financial aid, housing and other university services, including relocation and a monthly stipend awarded on the basis of financial need. The program also offers a study center, course clustering and group meetings and discussions. The effectiveness of the program has been demonstrated in its extremely high retention rates.

The Cooper Woodson College (CWC) is an association of faculty, staff, students and community members committed to recognizing and upholding the African American cultural tradition best expressed in the relationships between African American colleges and their students. This tradition involves the assumption of responsibility by adult members of the community, for shaping and guiding a learning environment supportive of, responsive to and nurturing of students of African descent. A key objective of CWC is the development of leaders.

The Summer Bridge Program is a four-week summer residential program that provides an academic experience to help students successfully bridge the gap between high school or community college and a four-year institution. The program is directed primarily at ethnic populations, who are traditionally underrepresented in higher education. Diagnostic testing is offered in basic subjects such as mathematics, reading and writing, and in academic programs available at CSUS; a dynamic learning environment is shaped by students and faculty from diverse cultural backgrounds. A support program is also being developed for graduate degree students. Minority students in graduate programs benefit from the Graduate Equity Fellowship Program which provides both financial support and counseling as well as a series of workshops and sessions.

CSUS developed a comprehensive educational equity and student retention assessment plan in 1990-91. Programs are regularly assessed with respect to their level of contribution to the achievement of campus goals, including student retention and graduation rates. Student retention rates, especially of those (students) of underrepresented backgrounds, have increased as a result of these special programs. CAMP and MEP students have a much higher retention rate than the general student body at CSUS. Tracking reveals that a much higher success rate exists among students in the mentor programs, adjunct classes and other educational equity programs. Entering freshmen in the Summer Bridge Program are more likely to complete their first year of classes.

The one-to-one involvement of faculty/staff and students is perhaps the most important element in all these programs. Students are more likely to achieve their full potential when they have the support and backup they need, and when someone expresses a personal interest in their success. Opportunities for group work usually result in extremely high achievement.

Chicago State University

Chicago, Illinois

At Chicago State University improved student retention and graduation rates are a priority. A 1997 goal of a 75 percent graduation rate has been identified for all eligible (first-time, full-time freshmen who are continuously enrolled) students. In less than three years the retention rate from freshman to sophomore year has increased from 55 to 63 percent; the two-year retention rate of first-time freshmen increased from 35.8 to 50.2 percent; and the persistence rate of first-time Hispanic freshmen went from 25 to 85.7 percent.

The university recognizes that a successful college education begins before a student enters as a freshman and continues beyond the bachelor's degree. This model helps students enter college through pre-college initiatives and recruitment activities, persist in college and graduate with appropriate academic improvements and safety nets. It also provides opportunities for students to advance in careers and graduate studies.

This is a campus where diversity is valued and supported and where individual needs are recognized and addressed. One-third of all African American students attending Illinois public universities are enrolled here.

Developmental courses in English, mathematics and reading assist academically underprepared students advance to a level where they are able to benefit from the college experience. An early warning/early identification system helps students receive the necessary tutoring and counseling to pass their courses. Summer bridge programs, faculty phonathons, a freshman seminar course and one-on-one counselor assignments for freshmen help keep students connected with the university.

Incentive grants for innovative retention programs proposed by faculty and administrators are funded through reallocations from the president's office. There is also a "we" tradition which means that all members of the campus family as well as the surrounding communities have a role in student success.

Through the Parents Partners Organization parents support activities for freshman students and the university as a whole. The President's Council of Community Volunteers, composed of retired professionals from the community, work with students as tutors and mentors and assist in the departments or elsewhere as needed.

Eastern Connecticut State University

Willimantic, Connecticut

The improvement of student retention is a major priority at Eastern Connecticut State University. The university has responded to the challenge to improve students' academic success, personal growth and retention with efforts to reshape the culture of the institution. Retention is the outcome of a variety of efforts and is a by-product of the successful learning and living experiences of students. The university has embarked on a comprehensive program to improve student services.

There is a university-wide Enrollment Management Committee composed of faculty, staff, students and administrators whose responsibility it is to track and manage enrollment management needs. As a result, minority and international student retention has increased since 1989, the date of the committee's inception.

A variety of programs has a direct impact on retention at ECSU. Such programs as the Learning Community Clusters consist of introductory-level courses which offer a conceptually integrated block of courses to selected freshmen. There is also the Student Advisement Growth (SAG) plan, which provides academic as well as emotional support for students during their freshman year. The rationale of the plan is to help first-time freshmen make a successful transition to college life. Participating students receive assistance in identifying their purpose for attending college, in clarifying values, and in setting short- as well as long-term educational goals. Peer mentoring by upperclassmen providing assistance in all aspects of the university experience, is used to support new students.

The Center of Educational Excellence focuses on improving teaching, learning and retention. In addition, there is an orientation for new faculty, opportunities for curriculum development, and the introduction of multicultural perspectives in teaching and learning.

The university has implemented a comprehensive training program for staff and student employees to improve student services. University/school partner programs and special gateway programs for inner-city middle and high-school students assist them in the transition from high school to college.

Student retention is tracked and surveys are conducted by the Office for Institutional Research. Focus group studies and other research activities are conducted, and these help to develop and evaluate enrollment management programs.

East Tennessee State University

Johnson City, Tennessee

East Tennessee State University, in its mission statement, addresses its continuing commitment to provide opportunities for students to realize their life goals. The ETSU Plan for Student Retention includes pre-enrollment services as well as significant intervention efforts, particularly those focused on the freshman year experience.

The ETSU mission statement addresses the university's continuing commitment to recruiting and retaining students, as well as providing an opportunity for them to realize their life goals.

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The university's plan for student retention includes pre-enrollment services as well as significant intervention efforts, especially those with a focus on the freshman year experience.

Basic retention activities include a data tracking system, two-day orientation/registration programs, college and school advisement programs, an academic honors program, a division of developmental studies, and numerous student organizations and activities.

A number of successful and innovative programs are also being implemented in this student retention effort; following is a summary of these programs:

Preview ETSU: In addition to the regular orientation program, a student-led orientation takes place three days before classes begin. This provides a forum in which students learn about valuing diversity and understanding healthy lifestyles. Socialization and having fun is the overall focus of the program.

African American student retention: The university employs a coordinator for Minority Student Affairs, and provides activities such as a welcoming reception, peer mentor program, academic achievement reception, *Ebony Exchange* (a monthly newsletter), campus wide fellowship picnic, and other cultural activities are held throughout the year.

Center for Adult Programs and Services: This is a facility uniquely designed to assist adult students in their transition to the university, and includes a specialized adult student orientation. Services such as assistance with advisement, scholarship programs, a baby sitting locator service, car-pooling assistance, and referral to other campus services are provided.

Early semester progress report: This is an intervention for "at risk" students, and provides a grade indicator in the seventh week of the semester. Freshmen, athletes and students on academic probation receive the report.

The Freshman Success Program provides personal contact to students who, based on the ACT/SAT scores, should be prepared for college-level work but produce less than a C average for either of their first two semesters at ETSU.

Retention Management System: The college Student Inventory is a survey designed to identify the propensity to dropout, and is being administered to all new or transfer students. Trained advisors provide results to students, emphasizing the strategies for success which are recommended in the report.

Customer service training: All administrators and support staff personnel have been provided training in refining skills in human interaction, with special focus on respecting self, students and co-workers.

Office of Financial Aid: This has been targeted as an area needing additional support because of increased activity. ETSU has committed resources to increase staffing and proceed with appropriate physical renovations to allow this office to better serve students.

Extended orientation class: This is currently a pilot program. The class, which will be mandatory in the first semester of the freshman year, will focus on information regarding college life, socialization issues, study skills and career planning.

Counseling Center: Students are provided with career counseling which can include use of the computer program DISCOVER, other career inventories, group sessions and individual sessions. Personal counseling is provided in a full range of issues including academic adjustment and relationships.

Special programs: This is a federally funded program for eligible disadvantaged students, offering tutoring in all general education core courses. Mentoring services are provided for first-term freshmen.

Syllabus attachment. A one-page sheet including basic student "survival" information is included as the back sheet of class syllabi. This sheet includes important dates, where to go for help, library/bookstore/computer center hours, how to contact a faculty member, importance of class attendance, and other types of information compiled with consideration of students' most asked questions.

Center for Undeclared Majors. Students who have not declared a major have been identified as a high-risk group. This center offers specialized counseling and advising for students until a major is declared and they proceed to be advised by their selected department.

Improvement of instruction. Ultimately, student retention depends most of all on maintaining an effective and enthusiastic faculty. Initiatives to improve instruction are being implemented, including major revisions to the core curriculum, efforts to develop writing and speaking skills across the curriculum, development of a handbook for part-time faculty, major changes to the student assessment of instruction process, establishment of an instructional development grant program, establishment of writing and mathematics laboratories, development of outstanding faculty awards in each college, and a campus wide outstanding teacher award.

Advisor update sessions. These sessions are conducted each spring to alert campus advisors of any changes or concerns related to student advisement. Sessions are also used as information-sharing opportunities to more fully inform academic advisors of campus efforts related to recruitment and retention, and of the role advisors play in the success of these efforts.

"Total Quality Education" Project. The College of Applied Science and Technology has begun a total quality education program targeting student recruitment and retention. Faculty and staff are taking an active role in student recruitment through personal contacts, school visits, correspondence, etc. A system of tracking students from the point of class registration until classes begin is also in place. Once the students have begun classes, the college has planned a number of retention strategies to encourage student success.

Targeting "high risk" mathematics courses. A system of supplemental instruction has been implemented in the probability and statistics class. The pass rate was increased by using a graduate assistant who participated in the regular course, then provided additional instruction and tutoring for the students. Plans are underway to replicate this model in selected biology and chemistry classes.

East Texas State University

Texarkana, Texas

ETSU developed an enrollment management philosophy which treats the student as a customer and seeks not only to improve services, but also to provide information about available services. The Orientation, Advisement and Registration (OAR) groups assist with the pre-enrollment strategies. These strategies include:

- Increased contacts between the institution and applied/accepted students
- Programs which may assist the prospective customers toward success, and
- Required orientation for all new undergraduate students.

Placement Testing and Tracking

- Placement testing of all incoming freshmen.
- Placement of students in proper developmental-to-general education courses as reflected by placement of test scores.
- Requirement that new students exhibit success in basic skills before proceeding to upper level courses.
- Tracking of students who tested and were found below par for college basic skills requirements.

Academic Skills Centers

The Communication Skills Center provides one-on-one tutoring in reading and writing for students at all levels of proficiency.

The Math Lab provides tutoring for students in any math class. Tutor hours are posted in both labs and students do not need appointments.

Academic Advising Center

Staff advisors are available to meet with students at all times.

Freshman Success Seminar

Provides three-hour credit for freshmen who learn study skills, time and money management and other skills to gear them towards success. The course is taught by faculty and staff.

OAR Committee

Total Quality Management (TQM) committee critically reviews all functions relating to orientation, advising and registration, and assists in implementing the enrollment management philosophy.

Financial Aid Counseling Center

Each student is assigned a counselor who provides encouragement, support and information. Other retention activities include the residence halls "Early Warning System" and tutoring service and the Mach III Academic Assistance Program.

The results of the pre-enrollment activities summarized here showed an increase in freshman persistence rates fall-to-fall in both periods 1987-88 and 1991-92.

Eastern Illinois University

Charleston, Illinois

Eastern's graduation rates exceed national averages for institutions the same size and type. Professional literature concisely indicates typical national graduation rates, to average 47-54 percent. Since 1982 Eastern's rates have been from a low of 59.1 percent to a high of 61.6 percent. The current graduate rates of ethnic minorities is slightly more than 35 percent which far exceeds the national average of slightly more than 25 percent. If the names of current full-time employees are removed from the student data base and a correction is applied for students in recognized transfer programs with GPA of 2.7 or higher, graduation rates since 1986 consistently approach 70 percent.

The university consistently monitors the progress of students and attempts to provide them with appropriate support services which aid learning and improve their chances of academic success. The success of these efforts is demonstrated by a decrease in the number of students who are not in good academic standing. In 1983, 11.4 percent of students were in this category with a steady decline beginning in 1989 to the most recent figure of 8.2 percent.

Academic Development

The vice president of Academic Development has the responsibility to implement and monitor student retention efforts in areas under her direct supervision, and to coordinate and indirectly support a wider variety of efforts by academic departments and other units within the university. The following is a discussion of programs and other initiatives which are or have been directed by this office.

Board of Governors (BOG) systemwide retention report. This program generates data using the common terminology and format for the BOG retention report. The original report required a narrative and analysis of 20 tables. These original tables and categories of data failed to provide desired information on gender, retention and graduation rates of ethnic minorities. Additional tables substantially increased the information available and the usefulness of the data. The usefulness of this data was also extended as the emphasis was placed upon identifying problems and suggesting strategies to address these problems.

Midterm reports. After midterm, a letter is sent to every student who is receiving a grade below C in any course. This office sends the letters to those students who do not live in a residence hall. The letter identifies the course number, indicates the midterm grade and recommends a course of action. Included with the letter is a description of all the academic services available at Eastern, their location, hours of operation and, when appropriate, telephone numbers.

Dropout by major. Every fall and spring semester each department chairperson is sent a printout of all students who have a declared major in that discipline and are no longer enrolled in the University. The list includes the GPA, the hours earned, ACT scores if available and current academic standing of each student.

Transfer printout. Every fall and spring semester each department chairperson is sent a printout of all new transfer and returning students with a declared major in that discipline. The list includes the hours awarded, identifies transfer institution when available, ACT scores when available, current class standing, and GPA.

Dean's List. All students who are advised in the Academic Assistance Center (pre-business and/or those who have not declared a major) are eligible for the Dean's List. Individualized letters are sent to students who are in the upper 10 percent of this population.

Possible majors. Each fall term, usually late September, each department is provided a list of new freshmen who indicated on the ACT profile sheet an interest in becoming involved in their discipline or related area of interest. For example, the journalism department is provided a list of students who indicated an interest in working on the university newspaper or yearbook; speech communications are sent a list of those interested in participating in debate, theater or drama; the music department gets a list of those indicating interest in chorus and/or band, etc. This has been very useful as retention literature indicates that students who are involved in activities and organizations and/or have selected a major which matches their interests and skills are more likely to persist and to graduate. These lists are

distributed as soon as they are received from ACT. This is accomplished primarily with the help of Testing Services.

Academic Support and Retention Committee (ASRC). The ASRC coordinates support services to students, collects and shares information on the number of students served in their various areas, presents workshops to faculty and students, provides a variety of pamphlets and brochures designed to aid in the retention of students, and engages in research activities related to retention issues. The materials prepared and distributed by ASRC include:

A one page flyer with support services listed and a description of the services provided by each, its location, hours of operation and phone number. Financial support for this project is shared with the Housing Office.

A one-sided flyer to be tacked on bulletin boards and posted on walls which lists support services, location, hours of operation and phone numbers. This is also designed as a poster and several hundred are distributed across campus each year.

A three-fold brochure, *Seven Easy Steps to an* EIU *Degree*, lists questions most often asked by students which are keyed to the catalog pages on which the answers appear.

Did You Know is a one-page flyer to faculty and administrators about topics ASRC has identified as being important in retention efforts. Last year the following topics were featured: services for students with disabilities, how to identify signs of stress in students, and sexual harassment.

The academic referral form is a multi-copy carbon-backed form to be used by faculty to refer students to the various academic support services. It can also be used by faculty to notify students of their midterm academic standing and recommendations for how to improve their performance.

In spring 1990, the ASRC conducted a study of students who were in good academic standing, had been enrolled in the fall of 1989, but did not return for the spring semester. The results of that survey were distributed in April and a copy was sent to each of the vice presidents. The study was conducted as a follow-up to the same type of research completed in FY89 with very consistent results. Information from these studies has also been used to provide greater depth to the BOG systemwide study.

The Academic Assistance Center supports the importance of quality academic advising in attaining outstanding retention and graduation rates. Successful and appropriate academic advising goes beyond scheduling classes, it involves personal and caring interaction between the advisor and the student. It involves planning, decision making, exploration of various skills and the identification of academic strengths and weaknesses. It requires monitoring student progress and the evaluation of services offered.

For the past several years a common pattern for Eastern's incoming freshmen has been for one third of the class to come to the university with a major to declare, one-third come with the stated intent of majoring in a discipline within the Limpkin College of Business and Applied Sciences, and approximately one-third arrive and are undecided about a choice of major. Of those who come with a major in mind, nearly 50 percent will change their mind before leaving advising in the Academic Assistance Center. Another 15 to 20 percent will not meet the admission standards of their desired major. Those students go through a difficult adjustment as they attempt to identify their strengths and seek an appropriate major.

The staff of the Academic Assistance Center provide other services to the university such as special liaison activities to the Honors Program and to the coordinator of Services for Students with Disabilities. They also administer the

mathematics placement tests and proctor a variety of university-required and national standardized tests. They talk with prospective students (and parents) and "walk-in" enrolled students who aren't able to see their departmental advisor. In some cases, the advisor sends them to the center for additional information on general education and/or graduation requirements.

Minority Affairs

Eastern Illinois University is committed to improving the cultural and ethnic diversity of the student body. The Minority Admission Program (MAP), implemented in 1989, is a refinement of previous efforts to target individuals from underrepresented groups. This unique, prescriptive admissions program is part of an ongoing affirmative action campaign to increase campus diversity. The program incorporates intrusive advisement, study skills, mandatory study tables with tutors, small support groups, individual counseling and a test and measurement component.

To be admitted to the program, a minority student must have an ACT of 14, a minimum of a C average (2.0/4.0 scale), sign a contract, and submit three letters of reference and a writing sample. Both parents and students are required to sign a contract agreeing to the specific requirements of the program. Failure to comply with these guidelines will result in dismissal from the program and, thereby, the university. Two hundred and forty-one students have been admitted, 174 are still enrolled and 92 percent of those are in good academic standing.

Orientation

Since 1984, Eastern's New Student Orientation Programs have experienced numerous changes. The position, director of orientation/coordinator of AIDS, Alcohol and Drug Information, was created in 1989. Eastern's Advisement/Registration/Orientation programs are coordinated by this office, which reports to the dean of Enrollment Management in the Student Affairs area. Changes in the format for the EIU Debut Registration/Orientation program have been more evident within the past three years.

This program has grown to provide students with information concerning transitional and campus awareness issues in conjunction with registration and advising activities. Simultaneously, the family members of attending students are provided with a family track consisting of presentations discussing numerous campus resources.

Attendance of EIU Debut programs is required of all first-time students, freshmen and transfer students. Orientation programs are offered during each fall, spring and summer semester for all new students who are accepted to the university. This orientation is provided at no charge to the students or family members.

In addition to the EIU Debut Registration/Orientation program, the Office of Orientation/AADI also provides additional orientation activities at the start of each fall and spring semester. Social and awareness programs are planned throughout the first week of each semester.

Conclusion

Consistent, positive retention and graduation rates do not flow from short-term trendy efforts. Rather they are the direct result of a long term commitment by the entire university community to provide a quality education to each student in a environment which encourages personal growth and success. More than 55 percent of students live in university-owned housing. This is particularly important for

freshmen as data show first-year students who begin their academic career by living in residence halls are three times more likely to persist to graduation

Eastern Montana College

Billings, Montana

Admissions

Montana's state system has both admission as well as college preparatory requirements as the minimum for admission. Students not meeting these requirements but with the endorsement of a counselor or other evidence of ability to surpass their previous academic records may request an exemption to these requirements. If denied full time admission, students not meeting the requirements may enroll for seven credits or less. In either case, a study skills class, along with other courses are prescribed which will assist the students' success during their first year in college.

Academic Advising

EMC has mandatory academic advising for all first-time students on campus, that is, no new student may enroll for any number of credits until speaking with an advisor or having a "flag" cleared on the mainframe computer system.

To accompany this program, EMC has designed a worksheet for use by advisors and students during their first year. Of course, this worksheet may be supplemented by worksheets from the departments (if students have majors) or by the *General Bulletin* which contains sample plans of study for each program/degree.

Each school within the college has an academic advisor on staff (apart from faculty) to meet with first-time students or transfers. These advisors have the use of the above-mentioned worksheet as well as their own, designed for their own programs based on the *General Bulletin*. The schools offer advising workshops for faculty before the fall semester.

Student Handbook

Several pages of "how-to's" for advising are included in the campus' *Student Handbook* distributed to all students during fee payment in the fall.

Probation and Suspended Students

Each term the Registrar's Office notifies students on probation or in suspension, telling them of their options to re-enroll. The academic advisors in the three schools also notify and invite students on probation to come in and see them for assistance with their status.

Withdrawing Students

Triggered by a request from the state's Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education to monitor minority students and why they withdraw, EMC implemented the common withdrawal form for all students withdrawing so they can monitor their reasons and follow-up as necessary.

Residence Halls

In the residence halls there is an Academic Support Program which is managed by the residence hall directors for the residents and includes workshops on

topics such as time management, study skills, reading skills, and relationship building. This program also arranges for study groups and follows up with students on probation.

Supplementary Courses/Programs

The campus is fortunate to have a variety of TRIO programs which work in concert with one another and the rest of the campus to serve our diverse student body. Student Opportunity Services funds a program to assist 250 first generation college students with financial need or disability. SOS sponsors "supplemental instruction" courses as well as its own set or orientations, student mentors and counseling services. Upward Bound serves the same population at the pre-college stage, and the campus is involved in working with these students and preparing them for the college experience. Veterans' Upward Bound reaches out to the entire region with its offerings of mentoring, counseling and pre-college classes to prepare its students for higher education.

The campus supports several courses including Arts and Sciences 101 ("College Survival Strategies") and Arts and Sciences 103 ("Careers and Majors") which are each one credit but taught in tandem each semester. Also, Reading 102 ("Reading and Study Skills") has been targeted for minority students and taught in cooperation with SOS or the Multicultural Student Services Office.

The Multicultural Student Services Office serves as a clearinghouse for minority students and their needs. Disability Support Services does the same for students with a disability.

Orientations

SOS hosts its own two-day set of mini-workshops called "Return to Learn" for its students. The campus hosts several types of orientations for the general population: two-and-a-half day orientations four times a summer at which students are introduced to a variety of programs and issues on campus. Included in these sessions is academic advising which includes meeting with a student mentor and faculty or staff advisors. It also hosts evening "open houses" for the community called "New Student Information Sessions," a "one-stop shopping" approach as these sessions offer admissions, advising, registration and campus services to the students in one large room. "Mini-orientations" are taken to local agencies such as Even Start and the local Adult Education Center where the college regularly holds information sessions for the prospective students on their own "turf" to introduce them to campus and helpful people/offices they can contact in the future. The philosophy of all of these events is the same: to introduce the prospective students to faculty and staff who will assist students in choosing courses, registering and general advising.

Retention Database

EMC measures success by collecting and maintaining information. Several years ago, institutional research designed a data base of information, providing to the campus information on "what works" in assisting the retention rate. EMC knows, for instance, that participation in intramural sports and the Recreational Activities program helps retention. As data continue to be compiled and as the college continues to participate in surveys such as the ACT Student Opinion Survey and CIRP, more is learned about the institution and what helps students.

Emporia State University

Emporia, Kansas

Emporia State uses a multifaceted approach in its retention, tracking and evaluative efforts. Activities within academic affairs, student affairs and administrative area are combined to identify and meet student needs and evaluate the success.

The Student Advising Center (SAC) is responsible for providing academic advising and assistance to help freshmen make a smooth transition to college life. Advisors are appointed and evaluated early in the spring semester. The committee meets biweekly with the enrollment management staff; this arrangement works well, but it is crucial that good communication and information flow be maintained between SAC and all areas of the campus, especially enrollment management. Developmental advising, an important aspect of intrusive advising, is the process of helping students clarify their short-term goals and develop educational plans to meet those goals.

Advisors in the SAC are selected from the faculty of each of the undergraduate divisions. These advisors are faculty members who spend approximately one quarter of their faculty load time giving advice in the Student Advising Center. Every advisee has two opportunities per semester to evaluate anonymously the advising provided and the advisors, and to make suggestions for improvement.

The Student Advisory Center reports to the vice president for Academic Affairs. A full-time advisor oversees SAC, the freshman seminar course, and the bachelor of general studies degree program. SAC is more an academic entity than a student service or administrative and fiscal affairs entity, with its faculty advisors and other academic concerns.

Early each semester SAC advisees are invited to make appointments for initial interviews with advisors from their intended major. If the student needs help with a concern outside the advisor's expertise such as assistance from a professionally trained counselor etc., appropriate referrals are made. Students are also invited to see SAC advisors if there are signs of academic difficulty or concerns expressed by their professors.

Generally SAC tracks the retention and graduation rates of its current and former advisees; this data is updated each semester. A special effort has been made to survey former minority students as to how, if at all, campus climate has contributed to their decision.

SAC also coordinates the delivery of CW101, Freshman Seminar. This is a one-hour credit course to help students develop study skills and goal-setting and decision-making skills, while also becoming more familiar with available university procedures. Data show that students who enroll in this course achieve better academic results than those who do not.

The federally-funded Student Support Services project on campus works closely with SAC. This program provides additional counseling, tutoring, and other services to the first-generation, low-income, physically handicapped students. Project staff coordinate with faculty advisors to develop strategies for the success of project participants.

SAC coordinates closely with the university's reading, writing and math labs, which provide opportunities for students needing basic skills development or needing assistance with particular classes or projects to receive necessary help.

Two other offices with which SAC works closely are Minority Affairs and Disabled Student Services. The Office of Minority Affairs strives to increase minority

student success and retention rates. Their services include counseling, programs introducing students to administrators and service providers, and a peer-mentoring program. The Office of Disabled Student Services works with the students served to develop strategies for effectively using university resources and to help develop appropriate modifications in course delivery and achievement measurement procedures.

One key element in the university's retention model is the role of SAC in not only providing effective academic advising but also in assisting other areas in identifying student needs so that those needs can be responded to effectively.

Georgia Southern University

Statesboro, Georgia

Establishing an Enrollment Management Council and appointing a dean of Enrollment Services reflect Georgia Southern University's commitment to maximizing each student's success. This coordinated effort, the strength of the university's retention program, begins with student recruitment and continues through graduation.

The Enrollment Management Council, which has campus-wide representation, coordinates the work of four committees (recruitment, admissions, retention and research). The council forwards its recommendations to the president. Retention efforts involve faculty and staff from all campus units. Below are examples:

- Faculty involvement in orientation, advisement and registration are ways to ensure that students bond with the institution.

- Success in U, the Freshman Residential Learning Experience, connects classroom experiences with residence hall living. Students living in two dormitories enroll in the same courses, attend programs that increase academic success, and are encouraged to establish study groups.

- Early intervention is central to the university's retention efforts. The Freshman Academic Intervention Policy requires students whose grade point averages fall below 1.51 (4.0 scale) to limit their enrollment to 13 quarter hours, two of which must include a learning methods course, and to meet regularly with the academic advisor. The student's GPA must improve.

- Students suspended for academic reasons may elect restricted enrollment as an alternative to dropping out for one quarter. This program requires students to enroll only in courses previously taken, strengthening their progress toward degree completion.

- The Freshman Seminar is a two-credit course to help freshmen understand the purpose of a college education, learn about college resources and requirements, explore values and interests, learn to make decisions and realistic choices, explore career objectives and programs of study, and establish supportive relationships with faculty and staff. The course is open to interested freshmen during their first quarter.

- The Summer Enrichment Opportunity Program brings 30 minority freshmen to campus four weeks prior to the start of school to provide an intensive focus on composition, reading and math. This program is both an academic bridge and orientation to college life.

- The state-mandated developmental studies program, provides academic assistance in English, math and reading to freshmen who are accepted under provisional status. Students receive institutional credit and must pass these courses before they can take regular college courses.

Grambling State University

Grambling, Louisiana

Grambling State's retention activities are focused on teacher education majors, some of its activities are designed to foster an early interest in teaching. The Future Teachers Club is an early recruitment activity which was inaugurated at Grambling Laboratory High School and is being expanded to include Wossman High School in Monroe, La. Selected faculty from the department of teacher education are assigned to teach courses and work with high school faculty, staff and administrators at Grambling Laboratory High School.

Pipeline Activities, designed to maintain interest in teaching, are primarily for high school juniors and seniors. The programs include opportunities for previous Future Teachers Club Members to earn modest stipends by tutoring younger students in reading and math. Faculty and staff in the teacher education department oversee the program in collaboration with the principal and faculty members in the Grambling Laboratory High School.

Participants in the Summer Enrichment Program spend six weeks in residence at Xavier University in New Orleans, La., during the summer. The program provides activities related to teaching and improves student performance and understanding of teaching as a career.

Efforts to restructure the curriculum have been implemented. Early classroom field experiences, restructured lower division courses, and revamped entry level and upper division courses to include required test preparation and professional accountability activities have been included. Integration of advising and monitoring, and systematic evaluation of student progress through the Centralized Advisement, Referral and Evaluation (CARE) as well as through faculty are critical components of this unit.

The Educational Resource Center has activities available to majors such as computer use, media and technology for classroom preparations, and presentations of class assignments including term papers.

Graduate students with assistantships serve as peer counselors in the CARE center, this center maintains updated records on teacher education majors. Problem areas are discussed in group and individual counseling sessions. A non-credit course, "Advisee Report," has been added to the curriculum for teacher education majors and group seminar sessions and individual counseling sessions are held to provide generic and specific advisement in efforts to explicate degree matriculation.

It appears that the graduation rate of fully certified teacher education professionals is Grambling's greatest recruitment and retention strength. Also, a large percentage of teacher education majors are minorities. Retention continues to be a

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major concern in higher education and creative strategies must be found to reduce attrition in this critical career area. At Grambling State University, serious efforts are being made to positively impact the problems of retention and attrition, especially in the area of teacher education.

Lincoln University

Jefferson City, Missouri

Introduction

During the late 1980s and early 1990s, Lincoln University experienced a large influx of students. Since then, enrollment has leveled and slightly declined. A student tracking system has emphasized the impact of student attrition on enrollment. Student retention has therefore become a priority at Lincoln.

Student Tracking System

The Lincoln University student tracking system allows for the tracking of cohorts throughout their academic experience at the institution. As it provides the capability of tracking by any major category of identification (age, gender, ethnicity, ACT score, rank in high school class, status in developmental program, etc.), it has increased the institution's ability to define and identify at-risk student groups. In the future, detailed financial aid and student recruitment information will also be included in the system. This allows for the tracking of cohorts throughout their academic experience at the institution. This system allows the university to define and identify at-risk student groups.

Retention Activities

In November 1993, President Wendell G. Rayburn initiated a Retention Task Force and charged that committee with the responsibility of developing recommendations relative to retention. In May 1994, the chair of the task force presented the committee's proposals.

The major program proposal calls for a restructuring of the freshman orientation class. This has been redefined as a mentoring/advising program. Once a student has been admitted to the university, he/she will be assigned a mentor/advisor. This person will work with a group of 15-20 students, on both an individual and a group basis. The mentor/advisor will contact the students prior to the beginning of the semester, welcoming them to the university and answering any questions they may have. This person will serve as the students' first year advisor, and will set up group meetings throughout the first semester to give the students opportunities to interact with their peers, ask questions, form study groups, etc. The mentor/advisor will also meet individually with students on an as-needed basis. Instructors of freshman-level courses will send notification to mentor/advisors if and when students experience difficulty in courses, so that they can be referred to tutoring, counseling, or other support services as necessary.

It is believed that a program of this nature will provide the kind of intrusive intervention needed at the freshman level, since research indicates that the first year is critical in terms of students making a connection to the institution.

Recruitment and retention have also become key university goals within the context of a major reallocation initiative that is currently underway. A subcommittee has developed a number of objectives that include incorporating the recom-

mendations of the Retention Task Force and developing the recommendations of the program and a new marketing strategy. Some or all of these objectives will likely become funding priorities within the reallocation effort.

Evaluation Mechanisms

Information obtained from the student tracking system is shared with all academic and non-academic units. Also, the enrollment management process will incorporate retention reports which will eventually be used to compare actual retention information with targets developed through the enrollment management process.

Summary

Since 1989, a Department of Developmental Studies has been in operation at Lincoln University. Peer and professional tutoring is offered through various departments, and a Comprehensive Counseling Center offers personal and academic counseling and coordinates learning disabilities services for students across the university. These programs are key features of the retention efforts and all future programs and services will build on them. Students are the number one priority at Lincoln, and the institution is committed to initiatives which will augment their academic careers.

Livington University

Livingston, Alabama

Livingston University has expended considerable effort in improving its retention program. Over the years the retention rate for students completing the first year has gone as high as 65 percent. As a liberal admission institution, the university accepts a number of students with marginal academic backgrounds. It has a commitment to those students as well as to institutional effectiveness.

The university's academic advising program, developmental and freshman studies programs, and intrusive counseling program have allowed it to achieve a significant improvement in its retention rate. The academic advising program requires a one-on-one mentoring relationship between faculty and individual students. Each student is assigned an academic advisor in his or her area of study or may select a freshman studies advisor. The student meets periodically with the advisor in required meetings prior to registration.

Beginning students must have a basic academic foundation before they can be expected to be successful in a major field of study; therefore, the freshman studies program offers core education. Freshmen are assigned to the College of Liberal Arts and all students, regardless of declared major, spend the first year working with advisors who have the ability to relate to developing students.

Academic skills courses, which are optional, address study skills, motivational activities and other essential elements for success in college. An optional career exploration class is offered through the College of Education. General Studies Program learning laboratories also assist students. Developmental course offerings are at the heart of the freshman studies program. Students' placements in English, mathematics and reading are determined by standardized test scores.

The intrusive counseling system involves the academic activities of at-risk students if the university cannot elicit voluntary responses from students. All at-risk

students must enter the Development Center for counseling about their current academic situations to take advantage of options and services which are available to assist them.

Lock Haven University of Pennsylvania

Lock Haven, Pennsylvania

The emphasis of the Excellence in Leadership (XL) Program is on retaining and creating academically sound ethnic freshmen. This is a student success program designed to enhance the academic performance of ethnic freshmen and others who participate. A maximum of 30 students meet weekly with the director of Human and Cultural Diversity (and possibly other staff and faculty advisors) who provide guidance, advise and create motivation for academic excellence. Students meet a second time during the week with a student team leader to discuss individual concerns. The program introduces positive aspects of multicultural education and the advantages of learning to communicate within different cultures. Study skills also reviewed during these sessions through the workbook, *Becoming* A *Master Student*, by D. Ellis, published by College Survival, Inc. Students are called upon to itemize how weekly time was spent, and how good study habits were utilized. All freshmen are assigned an upperclassman who acts as a student mentor. The student mentor keeps track of the student's progress and acts as a reference for any questions a student may have. "Tracking records" mentioned below refers to a variety of ongoing records of academic performance, attendance at meetings and classes, and weekly progress towards individual goals. Student mentors and team leaders receive training for their positions. One group field trip is taken for each semester, allowing students to experience a setting which is culturally enriching, and evaluate the experience. Areas of program implementation include Participation, Contract of Commitment, Meetings and the Multicultural Field Trip. In the Participation area of Implementation, students are categorized into one of four groups according to the number of class credits they have collected. It is expected that all participants will sign the Contract of Commitment by which they agree to attend all meetings including the field trip, act as an exemplary student, and implement the principles that the XL Program advocates, and make a personal commitment to enhance one's own academic achievement at every opportunity.

The benefits of the above programs are varied; the continuous collective gathering and interaction of these small student groups invites camaraderie and development of interpersonal relationships. The structural demands encourage students to transfer some form of structure to their academic lives and college experience. Travel and multicultural interaction encourage them to begin to view themselves as members of a world community. The weekly interaction with role models encourages the students to focus upon what each can become, and teaches the importance of long range planning and acting on those plans.

Additional retention strategies feature the following:

Welcoming ethnic students

Students of color are invited to attend a welcoming social at the beginning of each year where there are ethnic faculty and staff to meet them.

Faculty Mentoring Program

This program connects ethnic freshmen with faculty mentors. The faculty members are expected to contact and interact with freshmen throughout the semester, and each pair is allowed to establish a non-threatening, relaxing relationship. The purpose of this is to develop trust between ethnic students and existing faculty. The program begins and ends with a group social.

International Buddy Network

This program is designed for international students who are met upon their arrival by American host students with whom they have been corresponding during the prior summer months. The international students receive a tour of the university campus as well as the town of Lock Haven including a local shopping mall to purchase necessities. Cultural information is also provided to ease the transition.

Subscriptions

Several ethnic magazines not available in the university library are made available through the Office of Human and Cultural Diversity. Students seem to appreciate their magazines as they receive them since they are such titles as *Black Progress Review, Jewish Life, the Final Call, The Turtle, etc.*

Financial Aid Bank

Information for over 150 sources of financial aid for ethnic students is available through the Office of Human and Cultural Diversity. It is filed in an easy-to-use system in which students may search for applicable funding for their educational needs. Assistance is provided if necessary and there is a viable alternative to state and federal aid which is particularly appealing to students who have excellent academic standing but who do not qualify for state aid.

Resources for Student Organizations

The formation and activity of ethnic student organizations is encouraged. Students receive advice and access to group mailing and advertising for their organizations, and group leaders meet to combine activities and group efforts for some projects. A black sorority and a Hispanic student organization are among those recently organized.

Access, Funding, and Transportation to Other Programs

Students are sent to several student conferences each year, and much of the funding is provided by the Office of Social Equity. The Office of Human and Cultural Diversity provides additional funding, and transportation to conferences and presentations at other universities.

In the Department of Academic Development and Counseling, the Minority Retention Programs feature the Student Minority Task Force and the Student Survey on Racial Concerns. The Student Minority Task Force is a presidential task force that identifies the needs of minority students, what the university is doing well, what it needs to improve, and what it can replicate from other universities. Membership on the task force includes administrators, faculty, staff and students.

The Student Survey on Racial Concerns was conducted among the total minority population. The survey attempted to identify areas of concern for minority and majority students. Awards were offered to encourage a high response. Awards were $100 and $50 gift certificates to the student bookstore, and plenty of pizzas.

Workshops and tutorials help students help themselves to succeed, the overall goal of all these programs is student retention and a reduction in attrition rates.

Metropolitan State College of Denver

Denver, Colorado

Metropolitan State College of Denver welcomes the challenge of retention and meets it with diverse programming. Academic Programs, Student Services Programs, and Tracking are the activities which support student retention at Metropolitan. Among the academic programs are Adult Learning Services, the First Year Program, the Cooperative Education Internship Center, the Extended Campus Program, the Honors Program, Institutes for Entrepreneurship for Intercultural Studies and Services, and for Women's Studies and Services. There is also a Writing Center which is staffed by composition instructors and trained writing tutors, this center teaches, tutors and assists with student problems.

The Counseling Center and new student orientation are provided under the Student Services Programs. The Counseling Center addresses personal, relational and educational concerns through individual counseling, group programs, stress management, and biofeedback, alcohol and drug prevention programs, and crisis intervention. New student orientation offers year-round sessions to acquaint students with the academic and student life on Metropolitan's urban campus. This orientation serves as the introductory link between the diverse offices and departments of the college. Orientation, assessment and academic advising are mandatory for new students.

The mission of the Student Development Center is to significantly improve the academic and intellectual achievements of students by providing comprehensive and individual services that will lead to increased student retention and higher graduation rates. Services and support which have been individualized to meet student needs are academic, personal and career counseling, peer advising, mentoring, advocacy and referrals, leadership development, multicultural programs, career-oriented opportunities, student support groups, and extended orientation.

A special retention program has been developed for students who do not meet the Metropolitan admission standards, described as "window" students. This program includes an extended orientation, an experiential "hands-on" series of workshops, and activities to inform students about the total college experience and factors which contribute to success.

Completed files for over 700 students have been established by the Student Development Center for tracking purposes. All center staff participate in intensive diversity and sensitivity training workshops.

Middle Tennessee State University

Murfreesboro, Tennessee

Enrollment in Middle Tennessee State University has increased to over 17,000 students from 11,000 in 1986. With such unprecedented growth, the issue of retention has become a priority. While retention and graduation rates are compa-

rable to national averages, the faculty and administration maintain a strong commitment to "customer service", and providing students with an environment conducive to success and retention.

During spring 1993, a Retention Task Force was formed and charged with investigating attrition/retention related variables at the university. Activities of the task force include (but are not limited to) the following:

New academic advisors, one per undergraduate college and with varying responsibilities, were hired who have implemented numerous new retention related ideas and programs.

Greater success was achieved in those students who had taken a freshman orientation course, compared to those who had not. As a result, extra efforts have been devoted to the freshman orientation course. The number of UNIV 101 sections offered was increased and enrollment increased by 50 percent from fall 1993 to fall 1994. Experimental efforts are underway to offer the course during spring terms, as well as offering off-site sections at selected high schools and for business and industry. Monitoring of success rates of UNIV 101 student vs. non-UNIV 101 students will continue.

With the assistance of the undergraduate academic deans, a tutorial network was established. This will be routinely updated and will assist in identifying willing students to participate as tutors.

Students appealing a suspension now have to enroll conditionally, based on the recommendation of the Academic Appeals Committee:

- Limit student to a 6 hour load (or 2 courses)
- Limit student to a 12 hour load.
- Student must meet with the academic advisor regularly.
- Students with less than 30 hours must enroll in the UNIV 101 course.

One or more of the above conditions is placed on students requesting an appeal and granted readmission.

The advising process used in the developmental studies department is an ongoing retention project. Another one is the expansion of numbers in the Minority Mentoring program, in which the success rates of students are continually tracked. An important retention effort at MTSU is promoting student awareness of workshops and seminars, this is done through a variety of offices including but not limited to academic advisors, housing, new student orientation, dean of students, Developmental Studies, Adult Student Services, Continuing Studies, Multicultural Affairs, Counseling and Testing, etc.

Advising is also provided for "other need" students - e.g. the athletic advisor who assists the student athlete towards academic success; the Disabled Students Office, Office of International Programs and Services, and the Counseling and Testing Center.

Retention related activities for the growing number of non-traditionally aged students include enrollment assistance, information and referral services; academic and social seminars and support groups, peer adult learner mentors; the adult student organization, OWLS (Older, Wise Learners) as well as ongoing support.

A new position, the director of new student orientation, provides entering students with a positive, conducive welcome to the university as well as assistance in the freshman year. After the summer orientation programs, the Office of New Student Orientation continues outreach and retention efforts throughout the new students' first year at MTSU through a newsletter, workshops, etc.

Plans are being made to hire a faculty member on a 75 percent appointment in the position of a retention intern. The intern will explore and identify characteristics and national trends associated with the student population. This analysis will allow further development of effective retention strategies.

A Title III grant proposal has been submitted for consideration, which will include a retention component. This grant will provide for the purchase of an early alert/tracking system to assist in identifying the students at risk at MTSU.

Other indirect retention related efforts underway as a result of the Office of Admission and Records include telephone registration, a degree audit system and establishing student kiosks across campus. A new registration system, TRAM (Telephone Registration at Middle), is in effect. With this, students can register for courses, check grades, drop and add courses etc. from any touch-tone telephone. A degree audit system will soon be implemented, by which with the use of kiosks, students can access grades, select classes/registration, request degree audit, etc.

A number of safety measures (call boxes, free bus system) have been implemented because of the large commuting population and outlying parking facilities. These have become retention efforts in themselves. Student satisfaction is high.

The Retention Task Force will continue during 1994-1995, working with the retention intern, identifying data needs, and profiling characteristics of the MTSU student population, in regard to attrition and retention of students.

Mississippi University for Women

Columbus, Mississippi

Mississippi University for Women offers learning environments which improve student retention. The "W's" motto of individual attention gives students the needed assistance to succeed.

Orientation and University 101

Student retention efforts begin the day the student arrives on campus. Orientation focuses on empowering students with the knowledge of campus resources. University 101, a one-hour course required for all new students, involves students in a series of seminars which focus on topics from leadership and self-esteem to sex role stereotyping. Instructors in this course are carefully chosen for their ability to create quality rapport and respect with students. A tracking system is involved for at-risk students. Mid-term grades are analyzed. If a student receives at least one F, two or more Ds, or no grades over a C, the director of Counseling and Retention Services meets with the student to determine what the problem is and find a solution.

Academic Character and Excellence (ACE): The Learning to Learn Program

Retention efforts begin before the opening of the fall semester. Returning students with a cumulative grade point average of 2.0 or lower, or students with a 2.0 semester quality point average and an overall quality point average of 2.2 or lower are sent a letter encouraging them to seek assistance from the Counseling and Retention Office and to enroll in the Academic Character and Excellence (ACE) Learning to Learn Program. A second letter sent a month into the fall semester reminds students of services available by the ACE, or personal phone calls are

made to students. A third contact is made after mid-term grades. Students with under a 2.0 quality point average at mid-term are sent a letter with information of free services available and are encouraged to get help from the Counseling and Retention Services Office.

Peer Tutoring Services

Tutors in this program, recommended by faculty members, are equipped with information on learning style theories. Training provides them with referral sources for a variety of learning problems. This process provides students who are at-risk with appropriate services.

Faculty Interaction

Quality interaction with faculty is a critical part of any retention program. Student assistance is accomplished by building quality relationships and active communication between all parties involved. Faculty members are encouraged to forward names to the Counseling and Retention Services Office when students are having continued absences, inadequate grades, a dramatic change of behavior and any other alarming signs. Faculty are also encouraged to involve students in the available sections of the ACE. Learning to Learn Program and the final exam study sessions.

Student Development

At "walk through" times in freshman residence halls, students have opportunities to interact with the professionals involved in student activities. This provides the students with a familiarity with the student development team along with a chance to get questions answered and problems solved.

The university president meets with students during the year. During this visit, the president talks to students about positive and negative experiences at the "W." This provides a forum for addressing their concerns and an opportunity to learn what needs to be done to improve campus climate.

Evaluation

Evaluation is the only avenue to accurately know what needs to be changed, acquired or adapted. Three surveys are distributed. The New Student Survey is used to understand the needs and interests of new students. The Interests and Needs Survey for the Residence Halls is used to find out whey students live on campus and how their residential experiences can be improved. The Withdrawing/Non-Returning Student Survey identifies why students leave, if they plan to return and if the university can dissuade them from leaving or encourage them to return. This survey is given to every student attempting to withdraw during a meeting with the director of Counseling and Retention Services or with the dean for Student Development. A nontraditional student survey was developed for use this year.

The university is concerned with the whole student. It takes faculty, staff and resources to assist students to reach both their goals and full citizen potential.

Montclair State University

Upper Montclair, New Jersey

The president of Montclair State has placed a high priority on coordinating existing support activities, and extending them as necessary to make measurable improvements in both retention and graduation rates. Students are provided all the tools necessary to be successful in higher education.

A number of programs have been implemented to improve the success of Montclair students, and have been particularly effective when extended to nontraditional students. Among the most notable are the Educational Opportunity Fund, the Mid-Term Academic Monitoring Program, the Multicultural Student Mentoring Program and the Health Careers Program.

The Educational Opportunity Fund (EOF) is charged with improving the success rate for traditionally underrepresented student populations which often do not meet regular admission criteria. The EOF includes students from low income families who have the motivation to embark upon higher education. The program includes a mandatory, six-week, pre-college summer program designed to improve basic academic skills and to assist in acclimating students to the academic environment. A variety of academic support services are available to students including personal skill development workshops, computer assisted instruction and internships.

The Mid-Term Academic Monitoring Program monitors the classroom course work of underrepresented students. Feedback is obtained from the faculty early enough in the semester so that satisfactory completion is increased. An advisor works with students performing below satisfactory levels.

The Multicultural Mentoring Program was established to improve the relationship of faculty, administrators and staff with students of color. These students are assigned a mentor. Students and mentors attend workshops and funds are available to pay for out-of-class events like concerts and picnics.

The Health Careers Program has been one of the most successful programs for students of color at Montclair. This provides highly motivated and academically capable students with the opportunity to prepare for careers in the health profession. This goal is achieved through a balance of formal course work, comprehensive supportive services, field experiences and financial assistance. Students are provided a variety of experiences in the health professions including academic year preceptorships, summer externships, and academic reinforcement activities.

Faculty and staff of color make particularly effective mentors for students of color in their freshman year. This is one of the several reasons which caused Montclair to institute a proactive faculty recruitment program. Constant and open communication regarding recruitment goals and resource allocations has led to a close working relationship between the provost's office, the deans and faculty hiring committees. Collaborative networks have been formed, creative strategies have been implemented and a proactive attitude has been adopted.

As Montclair plans for the future, the graduation of students of color and underrepresented students continue to be priority. Plans are underway for a distinctive first-year experience which will affect all students entering Montclair for the first time. The goals include:

- Acclimation of students to their new environment,
- Achievement of academic and social success.

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• Creation of an awareness of health/wellness concerns

To help accomplish these goals, the university is establishing an Academic Success Center (ASC). ASC will be the location for virtually all the developmental activities and essential program support services directed toward first year students. Such activities and services will include orientation, developmental advising, study skills, mentoring, counseling, residence living, campus activities, and health and wellness programs. Through effective, intrusive programs and activities, ASC will be pivotal in helping Montclair State University prepare all our students for graduation and success.

Morehead State University

Morehead, Kentucky

Morehead State University's retention program is a network of advising and other support services designed to help students reach their academic goals. While certain support services are specifically targeted to retain students, it is the philosophy of the university that retention is, in fact, a product of all high quality educational programs and services. Therefore, retention is the responsibility of all faculty and staff. When programs and services appropriately meet the needs of students, retention is the result.

Retention efforts begin when students apply to and are accepted by the university. Admissions staff collect and enter data into the computer system to compile an Entering Freshman Data Sheet for each student to be used by advisors. The Entering Freshman Advising Sheet is an advising and course placement tool which provides, along with other information, the student's high school grade point average, ACT scores, pre-college curriculum status (enumerating any deficiencies that must be corrected), the appropriate writing class and any other developmental classes which the ACT subscores indicate. Similar information is also collected for all transfer students. This data sheet will be used first to assist advisors in appropriately placing and scheduling students during the summer pre-registration sessions. The information remains available to the permanent advisor to consult during subsequent advising sessions.

The information collected for the entering Freshman Data Sheet is used by a second computer program which pre-schedules students for any courses they are required to take because of low ACT sub-scores in English or reading or because of pre-college curriculum deficiencies. The required courses appear on the students' first schedule which is then completed with the help of an advisor during the summer preregistration sessions. The program also tracks the successful completion of the requirement and reschedules the student for the course the following semester if the course has not been completed successfully.

This computer support for advising continues as students progress through their degree program. A computerized degree audit program monitors student progress through general education and all degree requirements. The degree audit program may be run at any time an advisor or student needs to know what courses have been completed and what remains to be done before degree completion.

The Entering Freshman Data Sheet, the degree audit, and several other computer files which provide information relevant to effective advising are constantly available to advisors on-line through the "advisors utilities" program. This information may be consulted at any time information is needed for effective scheduling or other advising decisions.

Regular freshman advising is supplemented by a freshman orientation course, MDU 101: Discovering University Life, which has been in place for five years. While the course is not a universal requirement for all entering students, it is required by several departments for all their majors, and it is required for all "undecided" majors. In addition, many students elect to take the course. MSU 101 is a one-credit hour course which is taught by faculty and professional staff on an overload basis. These faculty and staff volunteers receive approximately 15 hours of special training to prepare to teach the course. A strong emphasis is placed on using an interactive, student-centered teaching style in all sections of MSU 101. All sections of the course use common course materials and a common syllabus which emphasize both the skills and the information about the university a student needs to be productive and successful.

MSU 101 has a special emphasis on writing and critical thinking skills which students need to succeed in their other course work. Students are asked to keep journals and to make regular entries, some of which are assigned to stimulate reflection about reading assignments and class activities. Students are required to participate in three out-of-class events such as a sports event or a university play with classmates. Bonding the students to an identifiable class group and to the campus is considered a crucial objective of the course. Students learn better and persist in their academic programs when they feel affiliated with the place and the people. Our ongoing assessment of MSU 101 verifies that students who complete MSU 101 successfully persist to graduation at a higher percentage.

Special sections of MSU 101 are provided for special populations. For example, there are sections for Honors Program students, for nontraditional students, and for students who have been provisionally admitted to the university. Opinion remains divided about the advisability of segregating students into special sections in this way. Nevertheless, the positive effects of being able to enhance the sense of camaraderie in the Honors Program or to tailor the materials for the older student convince us of the benefits of the special sections.

Academic advising is the responsibility of academic program faculty for all students who have chosen a major. There is a strong conviction that students are most likely to persist when they are affiliated with a discipline in which they are interested and with faculty in that discipline. Professional advisors serve all general studies students until they are ready to declare a major. Efforts are focused on helping these students to choose a major. Advising in the academic department is supervised by the department chair and is networked through a university-wide Advising Task Force with representatives from each department. The Advising Task Force facilitates communication and the distribution of information. Advising is assessed regularly using a student survey with individual results reported to department chairs. Advising efforts are rewarded through the performance based pay process.

Many Morehead State University students enter underprepared for college work. Many are also first-generation college students who often come from low socio-economic backgrounds. The university's average ACT composite score has been gradually increasing in the past few years, but still remains below the state and national averages. The retention efforts of the university must, therefore, be designed to assist students in developing the basic skills they need to succeed.

For the past several years the university has focused its professional development activities on developing effective teaching strategies throughout the disciplines using methods that have been demonstrated to be best practice. This includes an emphasis on interactive teaching, writing in all disciplines, and a

thinking emphasis in all disciplines. These efforts are linked to the Kentucky Education Reform Act (KERA) of 1990 passed by the Kentucky General Assembly to reform all public education. The university has actively supported KERA initiatives in the public schools and has attempted to incorporate all appropriate practices at the university level. Approximately half the faculty have already completed an active learning workshop taught by their colleagues who were trained to be trainers. Additional faculty were supported with funds from a USDE Title III grant to learn to incorporate both a writing and thinking emphasis into their courses. Title III funds also provided a Writing Center and a math computer lab to support classroom instruction. All these efforts are intended to help students improve their basic skills to be successful in college-level classes.

Finally, Morehead State University attempts to promote an attitude in all faculty and staff that the university's mission is to set the conditions in place that will enhance students success. These conditions include tailoring programs to meet the needs of students, applying the best of what is known about teaching and learning, and assessing the effectiveness of our efforts in every area.

Murray State University

Murray, Kentucky

Murray State is dedicated to the progress of its students and believes that substantial retention practices and policies are beneficial to both the recruitment and retention of all students. In addition to the usual advising and assisting of students, the university has established three programs that have shown substantial contributions to students in need of assistance. Those programs are:

The First-Time Freshman Contact Team

This program has goals to ensure that all new students are welcomed to campus, students know that the university is concerned about their well-being, they are assisted by answering questions or appropriate referrals, and professional staff assist students with academic difficulties.

New students, freshmen on academic warning, and students on academic probation are identified by the Admissions Office. Professional staff, student ambassadors, summer orientation counselors and graduate assistants work as "callers." These students are contacted with offers of assistance and referral. If a student needs additional assistance, referral cards are used and additional contacts are made.

Retention Alert Program

Sponsored by the Student Affairs Office, this program gives cards to faculty on which they can identify a student with academic problems. These problems may range from missing classes, to failing grades, to apparent personal/social problems. Based on this card and any comments made by the faculty member, the Student Affairs Office contacts the student by telephone or letter. Offers of assistance are made.

Project RAP (Retention Assistance Program)

This comprehensive program is designed to disseminate information about academic support services and to provide additional academic guidance to African-American students. All students will be assigned to meet with a member of Project

RAP. In addition to academic advice, students receive information about academic and social organizations, calendars of events, and a listing of student services available. Project RAP members track assigned students through calls and meetings. Any student receiving a Retention Alert or mid-term deficiencies must meet with his or her mentor to discuss academic difficulties. This mentoring activity is an important step in helping students realize that someone else has experienced their situations and cares for their progress.

Nicholls State University

Thibodaux, Louisiana

Retention has been a long-term consideration at Nicholls State University, an open admission institution. The first Trio program, which continues today as the Academic Success Program, provides a full range of support services and relies on management-by-objectives. The staff are selected to assure sensitivity to students and excellent teaching ("explaining") skills. One of the innovations sparked by this program is a social fraternity for students with disabilities.

There are several programs in place. The Freshman Division provides several transition services for entering students including academic advising, counseling, career development, study strategies, tutoring, and a semester-long required student development course. The student development course focuses on intellectual and personal development. The Freshman Division also offers a combined reading and study skills course based on whole language reading principles. Specialists work with the Freshman Division.

The Freshman Division has an Academic Alert Program. If a student has low grades at mid-term, they are directed to an advisor who works with them to explore options for correcting the situation. Counseling is available in the Freshman Division for academic and personal concerns. Licensed professional counselors staff this unit.

Residential Services has started a retention program in the men's residence halls. At-risk students are identified and invited to participate in tutorial sessions. The coordinator follows up with students who do not attend the tutorials. Computers are available in all of the residence halls.

A non-traditional student organization was formed to provide a support network for new and continuing nontraditional students. There is also a sorority for nontraditional women students.

The student's preparation for college-level courses is ascertained initially by ACT scores. Students not meeting score requirements are given Pre-enrollment Placement (PEP) examinations. Placement is checked again on the first day of class. Developmental courses are provided for English, mathematics and reading.

Tracking occurs in the Academic Success Program and in the Freshman Division; students who leave mid-semester are interviewed by a faculty member. Follow-up surveys with those who did not continue are conducted by the Office of Enrollment Services.

There are a number of policies which provide students an opportunity to succeed academically. The deadline for dropping classes is two weeks after mid-term. Students may repeat classes and have only the last attempt grade included in their GPA, the original grade still appears on the record. Students who are not on probation receive nine "bonus quality points" when their academic standing is determined. Once on probation, students do not get the benefit of the points.

There are training sessions for faculty in the use of the *Handbook for Academic Advisors*, which contains university resource information.

A wide range of academic discipline clubs, social organizations, entertainment events and recreational opportunities contribute to retention efforts.

Northeast Missouri State University

Kirksville, Missouri

The Scholastic Enhancement Experience Program has helped with the retention of students of color by preparing them for their college experience. The program is offered the summer before the freshman year to selected students of color who have shown strong classroom performance but below-average performance on standardized tests. The program features one for-credit course, a mathematics laboratory in preparation for college algebra, and various short courses and workshops on topics such as developing good study habits, becoming computer literate, and using the library productively.

Freshmen at Northeast must live on campus and the university offers the residential college option for these students. Features of residential colleges include peer advising, academic advising which takes place in the residence halls, interdisciplinary courses offered through the residential colleges, and additional academic programming not offered through the residence halls.

The university funds employment opportunities for approximately 1,000 students, and student employment is strongly encouraged on campus. Also, a component of academic scholarship renewal is a service requirement that must be performed on campus. This requirement equates to five hours per week for most students.

Customer service workshops for frontline staff are offered each summer. One of these workshops offered in 1993 featured tours of newly relocated offices so that front-line staff would know where to direct students when they returned in the fall.

A follow-up system has been developed for students who "stop out" and indicate that they plan to return at a later date. The system helps them reenroll.

A letter of encouragement is sent at mid-term of the fall semester to all new students from the vice president of Academic Affairs. The letter informs students of the wide variety of support services available at the university.

The FIPSE Grant/Faculty Advising Committee holds periodic workshops for faculty on improving the quality of advising.

Faculty advisors are notified early in each semester if their advisees are not attending one or more classes.

Tracking Systems

Students contemplating withdrawal from the university are interviewed by an academic planning counselor who helps the student gather information which would allow him/her to make an informed decision about withdrawal. Follow-up contact is made with the student, and this encourages re-enrollment and offers information on course scheduling.

The names of students withdrawing are then entered in a data base for follow-up. The tracking system is used by advisors and department heads for follow-up on students and also to monitor the reasons they leave the university.

Retention reports featuring retention data within the major, academic department and the university is shared by all administrators and department heads who in turn share it with faculty.

Evaluation Mechanisms

The university uses attitudinal surveys extensively; these surveys give faculty as well as administrators regular feedback on student satisfaction at the university. The surveying is one important component of the university's well-established assessment program.

Every student who does not return to the university receives a follow-up survey which focuses on initial reasons for choosing the university, as well as reasons for leaving and an evaluation of the educational experience. Follow-up phone calls are made if students request them.

Student opinions and suggestions are encouraged; for example, on-the-spot surveying is done to determine ways of shortening student traffic lines in the Business Office. Exit interviews which are required for federal loans are used to evaluate student services and a general customer service attitude is fostered, providing feedback on ways to improve.

Northwestern State University of Louisiana

Natchitoches, Louisiana

Northwestern State University is committed to helping students succeed in college. Many of its programs and activities at the undergraduate level foster student persistence. The focus on retention is reflected in reduced attrition of first-time, full-time freshmen. Since fall 1990, the retention of these students has increased from 55 percent to 61 percent.

The Summer Orientation Program for new students (Freshman Connection) and Orientation 1010, required one-hour courses for all students, contribute significantly to the increase in retention. The primary focus of Freshman Connection is encourage bonding with the university, its students, faculty and staff. The program involves students more extensively with the university by surveying their interests in activities and organizations during the orientation period.

Orientation 1010 continues the bonding experience with the university and the faculty and staff using highly selected faculty who function as role models, mentors, liaisons and instructors. However, more significant emphasis is placed on the development of personal skills. This program involves a wide curriculum including multiculturalism, conflict resolution, communication skills, planning for graduation, interpersonal relationships, among others. Students are encouraged to become involved in university activities by filing written reports of attendance at specified university activities and showing proof of having visited their advisors during the semester.

Northwestern's administration has acknowledged that academic advising is of paramount importance in strengthening the bond between students and the university. Faculty have access to computerized student records and students may register for classes in the offices of faculty advisors. Faculty are trained in accessing student needs and applying On-Course, an on-line advisement and degree audit system. Greater emphasis has been placed on the importance of academic advising; a faculty handbook has been developed and faculty have been oriented to the

magnitude of the advising responsibility as well as to the expectations of the students they are advising.

Northwestern has also instituted an aggressive program to follow-up on academic advising. After the advising period, a report is made of information obtained from the "Student Appraisal of Academic Advising" form; this information is made available to the president, vice-presidents, deans and department heads. In addition, the coordinator of academic skills contacts students who have not participated in preregistration and offers assistance.

A continuous process at Northwestern is providing for more effective placement of students in freshman and developmental classes. High risk students are targeted by advisors who use all available ACT or SAT scores in the student information system. Each first-time, freshman student receives a preprinted student schedule which specifies the courses in which a student should enroll.

The dean of instruction has recently expanded this procedure by computer flagging students who are ineligible for courses after the first semester.

An important method of improving student retention at Northwestern has been to enhance communication of academic progress to students. A critical component in this communication process is the coordinator of academic skills who sends special letters to freshman students whose mid-term grades average below 2.00, apprising them of available support services.

Northwestern acknowledges that accessible and professional student services are crucial to improve student retention. The university strives to improve counseling services by involving counselors in the development of the Orientation 1010 curriculum and by providing Counseling and Career Services outreach in the residence halls. Programming is provided for residents as well as for residential staff.

The university also attempts to bond students more closely to academic departments. To do so, Northwestern is developing and implementing departmental orientation courses to introduce students to the department, its programs and faculty. Capstone courses are also being developed to alert students to the opportunities for careers and professional or graduate study in the major.

At Northwestern, the degree of importance placed on retention by the university administration, especially the president, plays a significant role in the reduction of attrition. The president, vice president of Academic Affairs, dean of students, dean of instruction, director of Counseling and Career Services, and the director of admissions and recruiting are regularly involved in meetings on retention. The president has committed to supporting retention efforts and to institutionalizing programs initially funded by outside sources. The president recognizes the need to continually expand and improve retention efforts. Northwestern administrators are currently involved in plans to develop a more comprehensive early warning system and to use computer technology more extensively in the classroom and in student services.

Old Dominion University

Norfolk, Virginia

The multifaceted approach to retention at Old Dominion University focuses on assessment, advising, counseling and skill development.

All incoming students are administered diagnostic tests in writing, mathematics and college-level reading. Noncognitive factors in freshmen performance

are assessed through a freshmen survey. A standardized instrument is administered to assess students who are uncertain about career choices. Assessment instruments are administered at Preview, a two-day summer orientation program. Students are assigned to a professional advisor from Advising and Transfer Student Services who interprets assessments and advises students at Preview.

Advisors work with incoming freshmen throughout the first year until each student is ready to declare his/her major. An optional orientation course and a career planning course add to the freshman experience. Services are also offered through Minority Student Services, Student Disability Services, the Women's Center, Counseling and Psychological Services and Residence Life. Provisionally admitted freshmen, assisted by the Academic Opportunity Program, are invited to participate in the Summer Transition Program, which provides counseling and skill development activities for six weeks before the freshman year. During the first year of the program, each student's progress is monitored to determine whether additional advising or participation in the orientation program is necessary.

Students with skill development needs, identified through diagnostic testing, are required to take developmental courses in mathematics and writing. A college level reading course, optional for regularly admitted students, is required of Academic Opportunity Program students with low scores on the reading test. Students with specific writing problems are referred to the Writing Center for workshops or individual attention. Qualified students in need of tutoring are assisted by the federally-funded Student Support Services. Students who indicate academic difficulty on the freshman survey are encouraged to enroll in the university orientation course. They receive additional counseling early in the fall semester. Students uncertain about majors and career goals are encouraged either to enroll in the career planning course during the spring semester or to receive additional individual career assessment and counseling from their advisor.

Recognizing the role of student involvement in its retention efforts, the university has increased the number of student programs, lectures and cultural events available on campus and has expanded facilities for recreational and leisure activities.

Tracking all entering freshmen and transfer students has resulted in retention and graduation rates reported by gender, race, ethnicity and other variables on the student data base. Retention rates are determined after the beginning of the fall semester of the second year while graduation rates are determined at the completion of the fourth full academic year. The university has been tracking all entering freshmen and transfer students since fall 1984.

Portland State University

Portland, Oregon

Portland State's student retention efforts have moved through three stages: information gathering and description of problem areas, development of strategic initiatives, and implementation of these initiatives. Retention is viewed as the byproduct of factors that promote improvement in the quality of students' educational experiences. Improving retention, a process of continuous improvement, is the collective responsibility of everyone at the institution.

Stage One: Information Gathering

For some years, the Office of Institutional Research and Planning tracked retention and graduation rates. In 1990, the university joined a data-sharing consortium and gained access to comparative data from several similar institutions. This data revealed that the university's retention rates were low when compared to others. The university acknowledged the problem and determined to examine the causes of low retention and develop programs and strategies to increase the rate.

Stage Two: Developing Strategic Initiatives

In the early 1990s, several critical steps were taken. A Committee on Undergraduate Student Retention, comprised by faculty, staff and students, was appointed and charged with studying issues of student retention and making recommendations for improvement. After reviewing pertinent literature, the committee devised a competitive minigrant program to encourage faculty and staff to design projects which could provide data to be used in developing programs. Data and information were gathered and disseminated for review across the campus.

The university made several structural changes. The Office of Student Affairs was merged into the Office of Academic Affairs. An Information and Academic Support Center (IASC), a first-step center for information, advising and referral, was created. Renewed attention was given to academic advising and orientation of students. At the same time, an increasing number of faculty began to examine the curriculum and explore the potential of organizing new kinds of student learning communities.

Stage Three: Implementing Change

Several curriculum development projects were begun, including a major revision of the university's general education curriculum. An experimental freshman seminar program was initiated. In November 1993, the Committee on Undergraduate Student Retention presented its formal report, which was widely disseminated and discussed across the campus. The report called for a work plan to enhance the student experience. The work plan recommended that steps be taken to: improve access to high quality advising, build student community and connection with the university, maintain a linkage with students who "stop out," provide coordinated, high quality services for students, and learn from experiences at PSU and elsewhere to develop models of best practice to improve student success at the university. Each of these components was turned into a plan for development and implementation.

In 1994, an innovative new general education curriculum began. Its intent is to create classroom-focused learning communities. Entering freshmen will enroll in one of five interdisciplinary Freshman Inquiry classes, attend a freshman convocation, be assigned an academic advisor, and have electronic mail access. A survey is underway to provide additional information about the student experience at the university and about why students leave the university without receiving a degree.

The new model for retention at PSU has eight characteristics:

- strategies are based on local and national research
- data are benchmarked to comparison data
- changes are implemented continuously
- retention is given high priority
- local research is encouraged by a minigrant program

- faculty are rewarded for scholarly contributions to the literature on retention and student success
- programs are focused on structural changes to the curriculum strengthening relationships between faculty and students, and creation of effective learning communities
- student retention is seen as a core component of academic productivity

The retention effort has become an integral part of the university agenda, with responsibility clearly fixed with the president and the executive committee Work plans will continue to evolve as the university continues its commitment to retention and student success

Prairie View A & M University

Prairie View, Texas

Retention efforts are important to Prairie View A & M University, with responsibility shared by academic affairs and student affairs The university attempts to increase opportunities for students to continue their courses of study to graduate on schedule

Retention activities have been instituted based upon the belief that the setting of overall goals for the university and specific goals for the programs, asking the right questions to assist students in goal clarification, establishing systems for monitoring the tracking process, and interpretation and application of results constitute effective implementation strategies Support programs and services are available to students across the spectrum of need, whether for enrichment, reinforcement or remediation No student requesting assistance is denied

Title III activities, supported by funds for strengthening Historically Black Colleges and Universities, has broadened student access to academic support services in instruction and advisement Faculty abilities and skills in the use of technology have been strengthened and several laboratories developed These laboratories include reading, writing, verbal skills, tutoring/study/test skills, mathematics and science skills, math-network (a computer lab, algebra through calculus), enhanced electronic technology facilities for science instruction, curriculum and instruction improvement, the Academic Advising Center, creative design, integrated mass communications, and foreign language multi-media The Academic Advising Center is staffed by counselors who assist freshmen and sophomores enrolled as developmental, provisional and undecided students Their progress is monitored through the remaining two years or until graduation

Other retention activities include a mentoring program which provides personal and social support for students, a Retention Task Force comprised of faculty and student representatives of all colleges, specialized tutoring in selected departments and colleges, and a developmental studies program which monitors the state-mandated Texas Academic Skills program activities

Rowan College of New Jersey

Glassboro, New Jersey

Rowan College of New Jersey recognizes the necessity for fundamental changes to keep pace with an increasingly diverse society. Its retention strategy is based on the belief that excellence not only should not, but need not be set aside in striving for diversity.

The Rowan Retention Program provides support and counseling for students experiencing the frustrations that might otherwise drive them away. The retention team is made up of administrators, faculty and staff whose jobs are closely related to retention efforts. This group developed college-wide goals and monitored the progress toward those goals.

The target group for retention is first-time, full-time students. The backbone of the Rowan Retention Model is the Office of Institutional Research and Planning. It is charged with creating a data base to track each cohort as its members persist to graduation. This data base provides invaluable information in the development of retention policies and practices.

For most Rowan students, their journey toward a college degree begins with a two-day orientation program with their parents. The efficacy of this endeavor can be measured by the increasing number of students and parents who avail themselves of this orientation opportunity.

While this orientation is offered to all first-time students, an additional six-week program is held each summer to prepare economically and/or educationally disadvantaged students for their college experience. This program is designed, implemented and monitored by the Educational Opportunity Fund Office (EOF).

Student-mentoring programs are also a part of the regular academic year. Among them are the African American Male Mentoring Program, peer-mentoring programs sponsored by the EOF and student organizations, student leadership development seminars, and educational and social programs sponsored by the Department of Residence Life. Additionally, a faculty-in-residence program has been initiated to further enhance residential students' educational experience. Four faculty members were assigned reduced departmental responsibilities in exchange for living in residence halls and conducting formal and informal classes, programs and discussions.

The college also offers academic assistance to students through the Academic Advancement Center, which houses those support services critical to student retention. This center of student advising, career services, testing, tutoring, and basic skills improvement has proven to be an invaluable tool in retention. The Tutoring Center provides academic assistance in 72 courses for all students. The athletic department maintains a scholar-athlete program.

In addition to campus-wide retention efforts, each of the four academic schools maintains an organized program to encourage a supportive climate, to oversee students' academic progress, and provide counsel and support as needed. The schools have initiated such projects as cooperative-learning study groups for specific "impediment" courses, a portfolio approach in major courses, faculty seminars, and the institution of student organizations directly related to majors.

This comprehensive program strives to integrate support services with the regular academic program through a communication network involving all campus components. Administrators, faculty, staff and students work cooperatively to ensure the success of the program. While retention data are encouraging, the college seeks to constantly improve and enlarge the retention program. Toward

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these goals, the college has initiated the Teaching for Learning Center which, through seminars, meetings and workshops, provides a forum for faculty to develop greater skills and understandings in the effort to help students successfully complete their education.

St. Cloud State University

St. Cloud, Minnesota

The university is a multipurpose university with a large undergraduate population. Ten years ago, the student retention rate from the first year to the second year was between 62 percent and 66 percent. In 1992, that retention rate had risen to 77 percent. Over the past decade, certain basic philosophies guided the university in the development of its retention programs.

Retention Philosophy

The goal of retention programs should not be retention, but rather, providing an environment that meets the individual's needs and promotes student success. The university should provide a right of passage in which students are supported, welcomed, and assimilated into the university's academic and social life. A wide variety of experiences are valuable to students, but some of these experiences must link them to the institution. Finally, functions and services are not an end unto themselves, but play the role of creating a proper environment for persistence. With this philosophical base, certain structures, programs and services were implemented.

Administrative Organization - Office of Records and Registration

This office promotes the integration and centralization of student services. It is responsible for admissions, orientation, advising, registration and special services. The professional and clerical staff, interacting with students in all these functions, develop an attitude of awareness and service. A spirit of cooperation pervades operations, benefiting students at every step.

Division of General Studies

For students not eligible for routine admission to the university, there is a program called the Division of General Studies. In this program, students are required to participate in a specific set of team-taught courses, a student success course, and specialized academic advising programs. The purpose of each of these endeavors is to create an environment for success for these so-called "high risk students." The goal is an institutional fit with all members of the academic community that creates an attitude of success.

Orientation Programs

Orientation programs have the goal of developing and creating positive attitudes — attitudes for success. Two orientation programs are conducted: one consists of a single day during the summer which includes academic advising, course selection, registration, financial aid information, and an overview of residence hall living. A second orientation is held several days prior to the beginning of the term. In this orientation, students meet, once again, faculty and staff from the summer. During this time, additional information is provided and questions are

answered. Once again, the purpose is not to provide for mere mechanical processes such as registration, but to create important positive attitudes regarding the value of oneself and the value of education.

Student Success Course

A Student Success Course is available to all university students and mandatory for students in the Division of General Studies. Enrollment is controlled so that each course section is limited to 25 students and a random enrollment of students from all aspects of the university. This course is only a tool to provide students the opportunity to create an environment based on positive attitudes. The course provides contacts for students and promotes involvement and assimilation in the university.

All these endeavors, and additional strategies under consideration, build positive attitudes and create healthy environments for student growth and university responsiveness.

San Diego State University

San Diego, California

San Diego State is one of the largest universities in the western United States and serves a diverse student population. SDSU's president places a high priority on student access, retention and graduation to ensure that the university serves all of its students well. While students with special needs receive particular attention, many support programs are open to all students. A recent study undertaken by the Student Retention Subcommittee highlighted an extraordinary number of college-based initiatives for student retention as well as programs coordinated throughout the university by both Academic and Student Affairs. Student retention and success is best achieved by faculty and support services professionals working in concert to identify and assist students at risk, and to make sure that all students know where to turn for help as soon as they need it.

Mentoring

At SDSU mentoring and cohort programs have been found especially effective in retention of minority students and have been developed for specifically identified groups. The university-wide Faculty Student Mentoring Program serves about 400 students with Mentor Centers in each college. The lead mentor for the campus is the associate dean in the Division of Undergraduate Studies, a faculty member in each college provides leadership and supervision for up to eight student mentors each of whom assists a number of proteges. This configuration provides levels of support and encouragement for incoming students, both freshmen and transfer. The university-wide program is supplemented by those developed for target groups such as the Health Careers Opportunity Program, Minority Science Program, Aim to Teach Program, and Women's Resource Network. Each college has developed a number of these special groups which include small programs providing financial and tutorial help as well as advising assistance to small numbers, and larger groups that provide more limited assistance.

Students at Risk

The success of the mentoring and cohort programs for special populations has led to the development of similar opportunities open to all students: the Students at Risk program has led to the identification of students entering with low test scores, and continuing students on probation. New students have been encouraged to seek help immediately by enrolling in skills development courses in writing and mathematics, while students on probation are invited to workshops presented by college assistant deans where both academic advising and practical assistance are given.

Freshman Success Programs

The Freshman Success Programs are the most exciting of the new programs available to all students, and are generating a great deal of enthusiasm and good results.

Preliminary statistics for the Freshman Success Programs (FSP) in spring 1994, indicate that the programs are doing what they were designed to do. Grade point averages (GPAs) and course grades are significantly higher for students who participate in the programs, and students in the programs are more likely to return to the university the following semester to continue their studies.

The Living/Learning Center, the Integrated Curriculum, and University Seminar are three programs that support and improve student success. The Living/Learning Center is a residence hall option which includes University Seminar, Integrated Curriculum, support through workshops, tutors, study groups, and access to computers and other resources. The Integrated Curriculum is a guaranteed set of courses specially designed for Freshman Success, while University Seminar is a one-unit elective course providing students with a faculty mentor and a successful transition into the university.

Freshman Success Programs focus on the "whole student", the FSP philosophy is that academic success goes hand-in-hand with personal success. A small college atmosphere created within a large university setting help FSP students feel they are part of a special, caring community. Outstanding faculty from a wide variety of disciplines willingly volunteer their time, ideas and energy to these exciting freshman programs, and student evaluations tell us they appreciate the faculty commitment and find their informal discussions with faculty the most rewarding aspect of University Seminar.

Higher GPAs were the results of students' involvement in these programs. Also, spring semester '94 retention rates were at 97 percent for students in the Living/Learning Center, 91 percent for University Seminar, and 89 percent for all other first-time freshmen.

In fall 1993, the cornerstone of each integrated curriculum package was the general education course. Analysis of grades for all freshmen in these courses indicates that students who had the support of the integrated curriculum and the Living/Learning experience did significantly better in each of the eight classes offered.

General Support Services

Other support services available for student retention include academic assistance and life support services. Each semester faculty are mailed information to support an early warning system called Help for Students. Instructors receive a memo and wallet-sized cards to be given to students whose performance is disappointing. Faculty member and student subsequently meet to discuss academic

problems. Simultaneously, information on where students can get help is printed in the *Hall Street Journal*, a newsletter for students residing on campus.

Assistance information includes both academic and general life support services. Academic advising and developmental skills classes are listed, as well as services offering personal and financial counseling, including scholarships and financial aid.

Many programs include a fully developed system of support where students are assigned to a counselor, their progress tracked, tutoring and workshops provided, and an intervention implemented if necessary. The programs involved are Equal Opportunity Program, Disabled Students Services and Student Athletes Academic Support Services (the College Retention Program for students on probation and At Risk programs described above may also be included here). A program to track all students' success has recently been implemented by Institutional Research.

Providing transition to the university through orientation programs is essential to retention; besides programs available to all newly admitted students there are special Summer Bridge programs, that offer high school juniors as well as seniors an opportunity to raise expectations and define goals. Students are housed on campus for the one- or two-week programs and provided with classes (some of which carry college credit), skills workshops, personal growth workshops and exercises, recreational experiences, and academic advising. These students are identified in cooperation with high school programs such as AVID (Advancement Via Individual Determination), and may assist in raising the financial support for their special experience.

Residential Life helps to acculturate students to their new environment with a variety of living options and many different programs and activities. All programs stress the values of a multicultural community which welcomes students from diverse backgrounds and prepares them for an increasingly diversified curriculum.

San Jose State University

San Jose, California

To assist underrepresented students in their pursuit of a college education, San Jose State University offers a comprehensive and integrated program of student development services. From the earliest contact with potential students (often in middle school), the university assesses the skill level, academic and personal background, and familiarity with the college experience to develop individual plans for academic success. This is accomplished through programs specifically designed to address this constituency. Upon entry to the university, students are offered admissions and transitional support services. Orientation, academic advising, personal counseling, and academic skills assessment are among the routine services made available to students. Each student is provided a personal academic development plan which includes a four-semester course plan and notes all areas that need remediation. As the student progresses, individual academic performance is carefully monitored, allowing for appropriate intervention and remediation.

Instructional student development service specialists are employed to design support services, serve as liaisons and/or instructors in departments, advise students, and assess and recommend appropriate measures to address problems. Campus services include tutorials and group workshops across the curriculum, adjunct courses which augment academic course work, and university studies

courses to facilitate transition to the university. Special programs include (1) the Summer Bridge, an intensive five-week residential program to ensure successful academic, psychological, cultural and personal preparation for academic life; (2) the Intensive Learning Experience, which provides pre-baccalaureate instruction in English and mathematics; and (3) the Alliance for Minority Participation, a four-week summer program designed to increase student participation in science, math and engineering. Other programs are the Faculty Mentor Program, Minority Engineering Program, Health Career Opportunity Program, Underrepresented Teacher Identification Project, and Success in Science Program.

Early outreach and student development services include the College Readiness Program, aimed at developing math and science skills in middle schools students which will prepare them for college preparatory work in high school; the Student Affirmative Action group which assists underrepresented students apply for college; Talent Search, which encourages completion of high school and continuation beyond high school; Mathematics, Engineering, Science Achievement (MESA) which works with interested younger students; and Upward Bound, directed at first-generation and low-income students.

The university has a Vice Presidents' Student Success Focus Group and a Student Services Focus Group to ensure that the university continues to address the issue of retention and promulgates policies and practices that help ensure retention and graduation for its students.

Shippensburg University of Pennsylvania

Shippensburg, Pennsylvania

The university has developed an integrated approach to minority retention that is rooted in intensive campus services which nurture and encourage student success. The following retention practices provide opportunities, challenges and support which students need to become confident learners.

The Marshall Mentoring Program

Named for the late United States Supreme Court Justice Thurgood Marshall, this mentoring program supports the personal and intellectual development of the undergraduate minority student population. Each new first-year or transfer student is provided with an opportunity to establish an informal, nonthreatening relationship with a member of the university community which will continue during the student's first two years of study. Mentors in the program are carefully selected from the faculty, administration and staff of the university. Assignments are made on the basis of the student's intended major, career aspiration, background, and interests. While maintained formally through the student's first two years of study, it is hoped that the student and mentor will continue communication throughout the student's academic career.

Clustered Learning Program

Freshmen often feel isolated from the academic community and have difficulty making connections and solving problems. The Clustered Learning Program, under the Learning Assistance Center, provides freshmen with a community that fosters understanding and knowledge. One way this community is created is through scheduling: students share three of the same courses with other stu-

dents in the program. This is augmented by study groups and specific efforts by professors to create a cooperative learning environment in the classroom that allows questioning and experimentation. The cluster generally reduces students' anxieties, increases their conceptual abilities, and helps them more easily adapt to college life.

The Martin Luther King Program

African Americans, Latinos, Asian Americans and Native Americans entering a predominantly white university in a rural community may find the new environment to be overwhelming. The King Program was created to help minority students overcome academic, social, racial or cultural barriers and become competent and confident learners. Participation in the program is voluntary, but students receive supplemental orientation, mentoring, academic advising, and counseling. Freshmen students participate in the Clustered Learning Program. An early alert warning system monitors student progress and identifies problems in a timely manner.

Building Bridges Program

This program improves communication and understanding among students of diverse ethnic backgrounds. Trained student facilitators, including both minority and majority students, share their personal experiences with prejudice and lead discussions about intergroup relations with their peers. These discussions take place during regular class periods in relevant courses taught by professors who have expressed an interest in the program.

Act 101 Higher Education Equal Opportunity Program

This program, created in 1971, provides access to college and academic support for academically underprepared students from low socioeconomic backgrounds. The program consists of a residential summer pre-college experience and an academic year support program. This academic support program includes a pre-college program, academic advising, counseling, and academic monitoring. Freshmen are encouraged to participate in the Clustered Learning Program.

Learning Assistance Center

Established in 1983, the center assists students become more independent, self-confident and capable of meeting academic standards. To maximize resources and to mainstream Act 101 students more effectively, Act 101 tutoring and writing centers are a part of the center. The center offers assistance to students enrolled in developmental courses, writing, study skills, individual and small group tutoring, supplemental course instruction for the clustered learning groups, and workshops on study and life skills.

Monitoring, Tracking and Evaluation

In all these efforts, the university conducts thorough monitoring, tracking and evaluation for retention practices. These processes are used for refinement and expansion of services and programs to assist students in developing successful academic, professional and personal lives.

Sonoma State University

Rohnert Park, California

The composition of the student body of the university has shifted over the past 10 years from a majority of re-entry students, 25 years and older, to a current student population that is predominantly full-time and the traditional, 18-24-year-old cohort. As a result of this changing profile of the student population, co-curricular activities attractive to students have steadily increased. The university has, in recent years, emphasized a student-centered approach throughout the campus and concentrated on a wide spectrum of activities to increase retention and graduation rates.

Current Efforts

Course scheduling and educational costs are high priority student concerns. At the university, timely progress toward the degree has been supported by instituting student-driven course scheduling, with basic courses in composition, mathematics and critical thinking to be completed during the student's first year. Transfer requirements, improved tracking and course load limits have attempted to ensure success. More sophisticated monitoring systems allow timely intervention that help ensure success and diminish costs.

Educational Monitoring Teams

Beginning with the 1994 Summer Orientation, each entering freshman will be assigned to an Educational Monitoring Team (EMT) comprised of a faculty member and a student affairs professional. Each team will address two critical factors in retention and graduation: commitment by the student and connection to the university.

Existing systems provide each student with an Admissions Advisor and a Financial Aid Advisor. Additionally, EMT members will maintain contact with students through formal (instruction, evaluation) and information (socio/co-curricular) activities. The faculty member of each EMT will be provided with release time in order to provide on-going advising for eighty freshmen and to teach a required two-unit Freshman Seminar. The seminar will address the value of college, the transition to college from high school, problem solving and decision making, selection of a major and a career, navigating the system, managing time and stress, interpersonal relations, wellness, and other pertinent topics that help ensure success in college. After the freshman year, the cohort will continue but services will be reduced as students are "handed off" to major departments which will focus on academic achievement. The director of Institutional Research is a member of the EMT Steering Team and will develop an assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of this process.

Student Diversity

Promoting student diversity has been a concerted, campus-wide effort at the university for several years. Its multifaceted efforts includes college outreach activities, direct minority recruitment, minority faculty and staff recruitment, curricular innovations, support for ethnic organizations, and minority scholarship programs. These efforts have been supported by the following programs: Educational Equity Advisory Committee, Campus Climate Committee, Educational Support Programs, Center for Teaching and Professional Development, Faculty-

Student Mentor Program, Graduate Equity Fellowships, California Pre-Doctoral Program, and the CSU Forgivable Loan Program. All these programs recruit, support, retain, and graduate underrepresented populations.

South Dakota School of Mines and Technology

Rapid City, South Dakota

The campus culture continues to respond to the changing needs of students by continually monitoring programs and student services and making appropriate adjustments to benefit students. This process has resulted in several initiatives.

Tutoring Center

In 1987, the Tech Learning Center (TLC), a campus tutoring center, was established. In the center, trained tutors are available to help students with math, science, English and elective courses. Major subjects are tutored during center hours; other courses can be tutored by appointment. An increasing number of students are availing themselves of this service.

Counseling Center

This center provides individual, group and couple counseling as well as referrals to other resources and agencies. Staffed by a licensed professional counselor with particular experience in working with university students, the center makes every effort to locate appropriate services and make them available to students. Special programs and workshops in interpersonal relationships, stress management, time management, and communication skills are offered.

Minority Student Programs and Services/Student Data

The university has a number of support programs and activities for its minority student population, comprised primarily of American Indian students. With support from university resources, the ARCO Foundation, the national AISES organization, and federal and private agencies, the university offers freshman success seminars, tutoring in math and science, welcoming events for students and parents, outreach tutoring in local high schools by AISES students, and a Minority Student Study Center with staff and equipment to enhance academic and personal success.

Peer Advising

With the assistance of academic departments, the Student Services Division recruited and trained a team of 26 volunteer peer advisors. These peer advisors offer course scheduling and registration advice, counsel on how to effectively use faculty advisors and student services, host prospective students, and assist with student orientation.

Advisor Training

During 1992-93, a strategic planning group studied the advising process at the school. While many positive aspects of the advising process were discovered, it was felt that advising could be improved through training which would include student development theories, philosophies behind policies and procedures,

counseling/listening techniques, intervention strategies, and career counseling. The training process continues.

Residence Hall Programming

Programming in the residence halls has two purposes: the development of competence in students and the establishment of individual identities. Students are encouraged to develop critical thinking through programs and activities. A number of by-products have occurred, including reduction in vandalism, increased positive dispute resolution, a growth in friendships and sense of community, and academic improvement.

Ivanhoe Center for International Programs

A donor wishes to contribute to the founding of an international student center on campus. The process of assessing international students' needs has begun. Initially established in the library, some early efforts have included continuing orientation, a host family program, ESL program improvement and support materials, and equal access and representation in the center for all international groups. Continuing development of programs and services is underway.

Use of ORACLE RDBMS

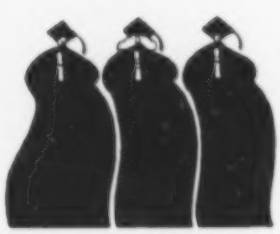
The university uses an ORACLE7 Relational Data Base Management System (RDBMS) from the Oracle Corporation to store and manage various data. The academic data currently serves two university projects: electronic advising and academic assessment. This provides maximum flexibility in these two areas.

Orientation Programs

In developing orientation strategies, three main areas of focus exist: (1) the demands and support systems for academic success, (2) education regarding life issues, and (3) social adjustment to the institution. The university holds a strong belief that an orientation program provides students with the necessary information and opportunities to allow students to become fully acclimated to the procedures and culture of the institution. The development of support systems within the institution to encourage students' success is essential. When properly planned and executed, orientation programs increase the likelihood of a student's successful completion of an academic program at the university.

Southeast Missouri State University

Cape Girardeau, Missouri



Students who receive and participate in a quality educational experience will persist towards graduation; this is the premise upon which Southeast Missouri State University operates. The University Studies program is based on the attributes of a liberally educated person who is able to succeed in the global village of the 21st century. Among the nine objectives which provide the framework for the program are the following:

- Possessing the capability of demonstrating critical thinking skills;
- Having an understanding of various cultures and their interrelationships; and

- Achieving the ability to integrate the breadth and diversity of knowledge and experience

Within the University Studies program, students must complete a total of 48 credit hours or 16 courses. Each course incorporates the objectives within its curriculum. All new students enroll in a freshman seminar to assist in their transition to the rigors of a college education.

The Student Success Series will be initiated in Fall Semester 1994 as a supplement to the freshman seminar course. In addition to supporting the nine objectives of the University Studies Program, the following themes will run throughout all programs: taking personal responsibility, choicemaking and consequences, self-assessment, values, active participation versus passivity, and embracing personal change. The series is a 10-week program in which activities are designed to mimic the classroom experience as much as possible.

The Southeast Quality Experiential Learning Project, referred to as "SEQUEL for Success," was a joint effort between Academic Affairs and Student Affairs establishing an institutional goal that, by the year 2000, every Southeast student will have participated in a significant experiential learning component. This initiative supports the objectives of the University Studies Program as well as links classroom learning to "real world" activities. Helping students see the benefits of their education as evidenced through experiential learning opportunities will enhance student success.

Project RECOVER was initiated to identify and, when needed, intervene in the lives of students who were considered "at risk." Students were selected based on their ACT scores and were contacted by a faculty or staff member during the sixth week of the fall semester. Project RECOVER emphasized three primary areas: study skills, career development and personal adjustment issues. All callers were trained to refer students to appropriate campus offices and programs. The importance of a connection and/or relationship between students and university faculty/staff is vital, and project RECOVER highlights this. Students who are part of this project have statistically and significantly higher GPA's and higher fall-to-spring semester retention rates than other students with similar academic profiles.

The Summer Prep Academy, created to provide provisional educational opportunities to students who were denied admission to the university, but who achieved a minimum ACT of 16, requires each student to enroll in two three-credit academic courses plus a one-credit course entitled University Academy. This course is designed to provide a sound base for further achievement within the university.

Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville

Edwardsville, Illinois

This is a comprehensive regional university that assigns first priority to undergraduate education; the university serves southwestern Illinois and St. Louis. To counter a declining enrollment trend in the early 1980s, attention focused on building a comprehensive undergraduate student recruitment and retention program, i.e. enrollment management. This initiative resulted in the appointment of an assistant vice president for admissions and retention, responsible for overseeing and coordinating academic support services units such as student recruitment and

academic marketing, school and college relations, admissions and records, student financial aid, instructional services (i e. developmental education), academic counseling and advising, the international student advisor, the Special Services Program, Disabled Student Services, and Career Planning and Placement.

An undergraduate recruitment and retention plan was approved for implementation by the president in 1986. The plan, comprised of 23 major interrelated recommendations dealing mostly with student retention initiatives, has been aimed at creating a retention-oriented culture campus-wide. Several of the recommendations charge deans with initiating and sustaining retention efforts within their respective schools and reporting progress in this regard annually. Most recommendations have been implemented, and the plan is currently being updated.

A broad range of retention-related policies and programs are functioning and include, for example, pre-entry advising, registration, orientation and university experience courses for new students, mandatory advising for all students each term, high school course requirements for admission, and required placement testing and enrollment in developmental courses for students with high school competency deficiencies in reading, writing and mathematics. A Special Services Program for disadvantaged students offers intensive advising, tutoring and supplemental education, and cultural activities. Similarly, particular advising and instructional support services are provided to disabled students. A recently established Student Service Council involving staff from both academic support service and student affairs units is charged with improving the quality of "customer" services provided to students, faculty and other staff, and the public. Other retention-related activities include learning communities, an assessment program to improve teaching and courses, and a Student Leadership Development Program.

Recognizing a commitment to reinforce the academic endeavors of an African American enrollment of almost 15 percent, special retention efforts are directed to these students. For instance, there is a minority recruitment and retention program which includes scholarships and mentoring. Project GAIN (Get Ahead In Nursing) for nursing majors, the Minority Engineering Program, Project ABLE for sociology majors, and Project MORE (Minority Outreach and Retention Efforts), a cooperative program to facilitate the transition and retention of students from community colleges.

The East St. Louis Center provides services to that city which has a large African American population, the services are aimed at preparing that city's youth for educational advancement from pre-school through high school. Such services include a Science Awareness Program to improve scholastic preparation in this area for high school students and a Summer Transition Program at the main campus for college-bound students.

Cohort studies are conducted on new freshmen and new transfer students. An on-line Student Information System which is available to all advisors, supports the academic advising and monitoring process. Participation in a state-wide feedback reporting system about academic performance informs high schools and community colleges about the progress of their former students.

Macro retention actions have included conversion to a semester calendar from a quarter calendar in 1993 to enable students to progress at a more reasonable rate through an academic year. Additionally, construction of a new student residence facility is scheduled, as is the creation of a College of Arts and Sciences in 1995. Creation of the college is intended to provide an academic home for undeclared and undecided students, to further strengthen academic advising

coordination between general education advisors and major advisors, to build closer curriculum relationships between developmental education and academic disciplines, and to improve coordination of the General Education Program.

Since the late 1980s, enrollment and retention has improved, most notably among minority students.

Southern College of Technology

Marietta, Georgia

The retention model used by the Southern College of Technology places students in remedial coursework based on their SAT scores and their results on a systemwide Collegiate Placement Exam, the CPE. The proposed model will attempt to mainstream all students in the case of math into one of four newly-designed math courses in accord with their placement results on a locally-calibrated version of a test developed by the Mathematics Association of America; and in the case of English, into beginning composition courses. In math, English and reading, the additional support needed by some students will be provided by the staff of the Learning Resource Center. This center will focus on the areas of English, English as a second language (ESL), reading and math.

The Southern College of Technology is a college of about 4,000 students offering degrees up to the masters level. To understand the difference in the retention problem as compared to others, it is important to note that all undergraduate degree programs require students to take about 20 hours of math and statistics up to calculus level. Studies conducted of student data at Southern Tech have shown that the retention problem is largely a math readiness problem, slightly more than 90 percent of students who graduate earn a C or better in math the first time they take it. Even though the proposed retention model will emphasize mathematics, the English, ESL and reading problems of the students will not be ignored. Having pilot tested a model where students who earn less than a C grade on any composition they are assigned are required to go to the writing center for assistance and guidance, it is believed that the model can correct student deficiencies in writing as well as through formal remedial coursework.

Southern Tech has three years worth of baseline data on student performance in our previous math sequence and in the English and physics sequences. The school also has one-year retention statistics for the past six years as well as graduation data. These data will be used to judge the attainments of students who will be using the proposed new model. It will take two to three years to collect all of the data necessary to address the retention aspects of the study, and the results will be submitted as soon as the data has been analyzed.

Southwest Texas State University

San Marcos, Texas

Southwest Texas State University is a comprehensive public university committed to academic excellence through the recruitment and development of high-quality students and the promotion of diversity in the university community. At SWT, student success and satisfaction are products of honest recruitment, effective instructional and co-curricular programs and services, and a competent

and caring faculty and staff. Thus, all segments of the university must work together to improve student retention.

SWT's enrollment management plan seeks to shape the characteristics, quality and diversity of the student body as well as to control the size of the student population. Early enrollment management initiatives included strengthening admissions standards, tightening probation and suspension policies, establishing a general studies core curriculum and instituting minimum grade point averages in selected majors. Systematic modeling is used to project and monitor enrollment (GPA, retention and graduation rates). In addition, a series of student opinion surveys are conducted with enrolled and non-returning students to assess factors related to student retention at SWT and to identify areas for instructional action. Briefly, retention program efforts are as follows:

- Comprehensive orientation programs for new freshmen and transfer students are conducted prior to the start of each semester. For orientation to the fall semester, intensive three-day sessions to emphasize academic counseling are held during the summer; these provide opportunities for discussions with faculty, staff and students and answer questions about university life and services.

- The Freshman Seminar is a one credit hour course required of all incoming freshmen since fall of 1988. The course guides helps students understand what a university is, what the student hopes to achieve and what he or she must do to achieve it. It also helps underscore the relevance of a university education to a student's personal, professional and civic life, both during and after college.

- Assessment of the Freshman Seminar has included student evaluations of faculty and surveys to determine attitudinal changes fostered by the course. One-third of the freshman class, randomly selected, takes the Freshman Seminar and this has resulted in a 6 percent improvement in the 5-year graduation rate for Freshman Seminar students compared to the rate for those who did not take the course. In addition, making a grade of B or A in the course is a strong predictor of retention at SWT.

- A collaborative learning model, Targeted Academic Groupings (TAG) Teams, consists of 27 students who enter together and progress through the first year from orientation to final exams in the spring. The team registers for a core of at least three courses each semester; students may, however, register for five to eight semester credit hours of their choice. Thus, the TAG Teams have a common group experience at SWT that enables them to answer each other's questions in their common classes, provide mutual support, make friends, and learn from each other. They also are encouraged to participate together in out-of-class-activities such as learning-oriented study sessions and extra-curricular events. Assessment of the project revealed significantly higher grades for TAG students and their non-TAG peers in core courses such as English composition, American history, economics, college algebra and mathematics for business.

The Student Learning Assistance Center (SLAC)

Seeks to improve students' academic skills by providing learning support resources in six general areas as described. Free academic assistance is provided in selected subjects, as well as in note and test taking, goal setting and time management skills, and preparation for standardized exams.

There is a Residence Hall Tutoring program where free academic tutoring is provided during late evening hours after the SLAC office is closed

Supplemental instruction provides study skills training in the context of traditionally challenging courses such as English, math and history

Presentations are made on topics such as study skills, academic improvement and preparation for graduate school examinations and specialized programs can be designed to fit the needs of a class, campus club or organization

An effective learning three-credit course helps students develop college level skills, focuses on how people learn and how they can make positive changes in their academic habits through the application of learning strategies and self-management techniques

The SWT Mentoring Program seeks to ensure a smooth transition to university life for incoming students by matching them with a faculty or staff mentor who serves as a role model, advisor and guide Mentors meet informally with students throughout the first year to discuss problems, concerns, goals, and experiences They encourage students in their academic activities, provide information about organizations, activities and career opportunities, and refer students to appropriate campus resources as needed

Assessment of participants' first-year academic progress found that fall 1992 mentored students achieved an average first-semester GPA of 2 79 compared to 2 33 for freshmen overall The percentage of these mentored students returning for their second fall semester at SWT was 27 percent higher than for freshmen overall Higher GPA and one-year retention rates were also observed in fall 1993 mentored students compared to freshmen overall A peer mentoring component was added in fall of 1993 with junior and senior level peers mentoring new freshmen

Academic interventions using mid-term grade notifications have been effective Faculty teaching freshmen and sophomore level courses assess grades of D or F at the mid-point of each fall and spring semester These grades are distributed to students via the registrar's office, with a written notice of suggested actions to be taken and a list of academic support resources available at SWT Beginning in the spring of 1993, various methods of promoting more intrusive intervention with these students were implemented

A high percentage of students experience difficulty passing freshman level mathematics courses To help remedy this, the faculty have made systemic changes and enhanced the use of technology in the teaching of math courses

In the spring of 1994, SWT implemented the Retention Incentive Grant (RIG) Program, this is an internal grant-in-aid-program that funds demonstration programs, services and curricular initiatives and improves student learning and success during the freshman and sophomore years at SWT Proposals were submitted and 11 were funded totalling approximately $90,000 through a competitive, campus-wide process Selection criteria included collaborative authorship, anticipated impact of the proposed project on retention of students, particularly on target populations, and the potential for convertability to larger scale use at the institution Various projects ranging from supplemental instruction programs in math and history to mentoring and tutorials of freshman and sophomore students by honor students have been submitted to the RIG program The principal investigators of these grants will participate in and contribute to a seminar series over the 18 months of the grant to exchange information and address issues of student success and retention at SWT and in higher education

State University of New York, College at Geneseo

Geneseo, New York

The College at Geneseo offers support to students through a variety of activities focusing on undergraduates at large as well as "at risk" groups. As a result, these activities combined with a very selective admissions process have resulted in a 92 percent return rate from the freshman to sophomore year and a 76 percent degree completion rate. Program details are as follows.

Academic Support Services provided by Academic Departments

The office of the dean of the college monitors student academic progress at the end of each semester and provides academic advisors with the names of advisees who are experiencing difficulty in terms of low grade point average. Students are encouraged to take advantage of departmental support activities.

Counseling Office

This office provides services which relate to academic skills in addition to personal counseling. Topics covered are: interest testing, study skills testing, math, writing, anxieties and stress.

Dean of the College

Assistance and information are offered regarding course waivers, transfer credits, directed studies, study abroad, withdrawals, drop/adds, policy interpretation, advisor/advisee lists, visiting student programs, cross registration, fellowships and undergraduate programs. In addition, this office monitors mid-semester grades for freshmen and makes referrals as needed.

Dean of Students and Residence Life

This office coordinates a tutoring service for all students provided by the Inter-Greek Council. In addition, special interest area housing for students interested in science and mathematics is available for the following majors: biology, chemistry, computer science, geological sciences, mathematics and physics. Interest housing is also available for students interested in wellness—physical, emotional, social, intellectual, cultural, vocational, and spiritual. Some sections of residence halls have been designated as "quiet." Each year the Dean of Students Office also conducts a Quality of Life Survey to ascertain student reactions to services offered by the Student Affairs Division.

Educational Opportunity Program

Tutoring is offered for students participating in the program as well as support services pertaining to note taking, word processing, test-taking, time management, and writing research papers.

Peer Mentor Program

The purpose of this program is to provide freshmen with advice and information necessary for adjustment to college by students who are already attending. Topics covered include study habits, exam anxiety, writing papers, note taking and registration.

Transitional Opportunity Program (TOP)

Minority students who do not meet regular admissions requirements and are financially ineligible for EON have an opportunity to participate in this program which involves tutoring, time management, study skills, test taking, library use and note taking. In addition, academic counseling and advisement and special package workshops are available. Disabled students are accommodated under this program.

Sports and Recreation Study Table

Special talent students are required to participate in this program which includes time management, study skills and test taking sessions. Other features include lectures on exercise, alcohol and substance abuse, and nutrition.

Since no single office or person has the ultimate responsibility for retention (except, indirectly, the dean of the college), related issues are approached as a total Geneseo effort—everyone is responsible for retaining students who should be retained. Extraordinary results demonstrate that a holistic effort works with the admittedly bright students who enroll.

State University of New York, College at New Paltz

New Paltz, New York

After over 20 years of operation, programs that promote retention have become far more important than recruitment itself, and such programs have been decentralized throughout SUNY at New Paltz. Retention is everyone's responsibility; the credit for a successful retention effort goes to those who, over the years, have both created and implemented what has become a loosely articulated, constantly changing program that continues to provide historically underrepresented students with an array of support activities that will enhance their likelihood of graduating from the college and leading productive and successful lives after graduation.

The fall 1993 enrollment at New Paltz was 7,941 broken down thus:

4,740 full-time undergraduates	60 percent
1,429 part-time undergraduates	18 percent
370 full-time graduates	5 percent
1,392 part-time graduates	17 percent

Of the full-time undergraduate students, 9.6 percent are African Americans, 8.6 percent are Latino, 4.2 percent are Asian-Pacific Islander, and 4 percent are foreign students. The four-year retention rates of entering freshmen have increased from 45 percent from the 1986 cohort to 62 percent for the 1989 cohort. The retention rates for Latinos and African Americans in those cohorts have also increased from 51 percent to 67 percent (African American) and from 42 percent to 57 percent (Latino). Part of the increased retention may be attributed to higher admission standards.

The College's Educational Opportunity Program (EOP), a state-funded recruitment and support program for academically and economically disadvantaged students, is the central activity in the institution's efforts to retain historically underrepresented students. EOP student retention has mirrored non-EOP rates, the

1986 freshman cohort had a 42 percent EOP retention rate, the 1989 cohort had a 62 percent rate. Entrance standards for EOP students have risen parallel to those generally admitted.

EOP is a prescriptive program for college success, it provides its students with structure, support services, role models and leadership opportunities. The program seeks to protect and nurture its students without sheltering them from the total environment of the college. The academic year program assigns each student to a professional academic advisor and a peer counselor, requires students to attend study groups, to take a College Learning Techniques course, to learn word processing and computer use, and to receive individual tutoring if it is needed. EOP students are encouraged to develop leadership skills as well as involvement in and commitment to the total campus community.

A major institutional goal at SUNY at New Paltz is the creation of a campus environment that welcomes every aspect of human diversity and sets an expectation that everyone who works, learns and lives on the campus has a responsibility to contribute to the development of an environment where everyone is respected. The Student Affairs Division of the College has created a framework for fostering a diverse community through programs that make clear acceptable and unacceptable behavior for students, faculty and staff through activities that help underrepresented students "connect" with campus health, counseling and academic support services and with religious institutions in the community. The development of an inclusive residential community emphasizes tolerance, shared responsibilities and participation, provides avenues for resolving interpersonal and inter-group conflicts, depends on a diverse residence hall staff that provides role models, celebrates diversity and appreciates differences. It is important to help students and staff understand and accept that cultural awareness sometimes means identifying and socializing with like groups. Fostering student-initiated programs that incorporate several of the culturally diverse groups on campus has helped students appreciate their own role in creating a comfortable community.

The college's record of participation in student governance by underrepresented students is particularly important; since 1977, two of the 17 presidents of the Student Association have been African American males, two were African American females, one was an Asian male, two were Latino, and one was a student in a wheelchair. During these years, many other positions on the Student Association Executive Board, Student Senate and Council of organizations were filled by historically underrepresented students.

At least half of the college's underrepresented students are admitted under regular conditions. These students are ineligible for EOP and its well-funded support services, and are also in need of structure, support, role models, and a sense of belonging. The Minority Scholarship Program provides a measure of merit and need-based financial assistance to students who may qualify for relatively little aid. Over the years, supporters of the program have helped the college develop a significant endowment of non-state funds designated for minority scholarships. The Scholars Mentorship Program, a faculty-sponsored activity, was designed for non-EOP underrepresented students. Those who wish to participate are assigned a faculty/staff mentor and a peer mentor - all from historically underrepresented groups - and are included in special events and trips designed to promote multicultural awareness and a sense of belonging. Second-year students (Tier II) in the program may enroll in a credit course, "Counseling of Underrepresented Students," and serve as peer mentors. Juniors and seniors who enroll in the black

and Latino leadership course can become Tier III mentors who are actively engaged in leadership activities on the campus.

The Office of Multicultural Programs and Affirmative Action, which reports to the president, promotes retention through new-employee orientation programs and training workshops for faculty and staff that emphasize the sensitivity to difference that is so essential to the smooth functioning of a culturally diverse community. Increasing success in making affirmative action faculty and staff appointments helps increase the role models available to underrepresented students thereby promoting retention.

Historically underrepresented students are often academically underprepared and in need of developmental work that emphasizes not only academic skills but also a critical thinking curriculum that is integrated with the general education courses that students will be taking. In collaboration with EOP, the Office of Student Affairs, and the academic departments, the Learning Resource Center focuses on addressing the pedagogical and academic issues that contribute to the success of underrepresented students. The major concern is to avoid as much as possible compartmentalizing academic support programs and to find ways to relate them to the general academic program: e.g., a unique pedagogical arrangement where in-class composition tutors work with at-risk students under the direction of department faculty on a three-course block for non-native speakers of English. This block is composed of Critical Thinking, Introduction to Sociology, and Preparatory Writing. The goal is to support the needs of the underrepresented students while ensuring that they experience the success in the academic program shared by all students.

SUNY at New Paltz is proud of its achievements in developing and sustaining a multicultural community providing a multifaceted, articulated support system that encourages the retention of historically underrepresented students. A new general education program with additional emphasis on a global and culturally diverse curriculum, a new major in Latin American Studies, expansion of the minor in Asian Studies, planning for faculty workshops on gender equity in the classroom and the pedagogy of cultural diversity - these represent some of the recent efforts of the academic program. The university is sure that there are no simplistic solutions to the retention of any student and certainly not the historically underrepresented. Also, there is no part of this institution that can be and remain uninvolved in the retention effort. A campus that fosters retention of the culturally diverse student population is a fragile, volatile, ever-changing community in which all - students, faculty and staff - must be committed to the inclusion of all by finding ways to meet the wide range of needs that exist among its individual members.

State University of New York, College at Old Westbury

Old Westbury, New York

The retention plan of the State University of New York College at Old Westbury provides students with a variety of comprehensive and integrated programs designed to promote cognitive and effective growth. Retention is a shared responsibility and a systematic institutional enterprise requiring collaboration between and among all divisions of the college. Central to the design are the programs and services that are responsive to the diverse needs of first-time stu-

dents in terms of academic preparation, racial and cultural ethnicity, and the special needs of athletes, physically challenged, learning disabled and commuter students.

Retention initiatives at Old Westbury have included a wide array of targeted activities. Among these are the assessment and placement of students based on their academic preparation. Students' performance on the College Placement Examination (CPE) determines the level of mathematics, English and content area courses in which they can enroll. A recently implemented post-orientation course, "Invitation to Learning," has been designed to assist first-year students in making a successful transition to college. This course provides an intensive orientation to the College at Old Westbury. In design, it seeks to empower students to be active learners and to assist them in clarifying and achieving their educational goals. The Retention/Graduation Task Force's publication, *A Guide to Academic Success*, is especially geared to the first-year student. In addition, specially designed courses drawn from the sciences, social sciences and the arts, are offered for first-year students.

The college's efforts to provide a more responsive type of academic support service have resulted in the implementation of a decentralized model for the delivery of these services. Individual programs now have a responsibility for the hiring, training and supervision of the staff and faculty that provide tutoring for a given academic program. This arrangement has also contributed to having tutors who are knowledgeable in the subject area that they tutor.

Orientation has occupied a special emphasis in Old Westbury's retention efforts. It is seen as an empowerment process and one of its primary emphases is on goal definition which takes place in various structured and unstructured learning experiences. In addition, programs have been designed to promote greater bonding among students, especially in those students who are more likely to drop out because of factors related to transition adjustment, academic boredom, academic unpreparedness, lack of certainty about the major/career, and irrelevance of the value of a college education.

A comprehensive academic advising system, supported by the staff of the Center for Academic Advising and Testing as well as faculty in individual programs occupies a central role in retention efforts at Old Westbury. Academic advising has, as its primary thrust, the goal of addressing retention-affecting factors such as uncertainty about academic and career objectives, poor academic preparation, heavy work schedules, and irrelevancy of education, profiles which frequently recur in students who leave college without graduating.

Old Westbury's interdisciplinary General Education Program places even greater demands on sound academic advisement. The need to establish transfer credit equivalencies for disciplinary courses requires the application of consistent standards of review. The development of a comprehensive transfer of credit matrix as well as departmental matrices for area community colleges provides both academic advisers and transfer students with the critical advising information. A five-week academic advisement period during which students preregister for the next semester's courses has contributed to the kind of academic advisement that assists students in identifying and clarifying career goals and aspirations. Special advisement is also provided for student athletes, as well as for students who are learning disabled or physically challenged.

An academic monitoring alert program is in place at SUNY Old Westbury. At the beginning of the semester, faculty receive information concerning those students in their classes who are on academic probation. Faculty are asked to pay special attention to these students and to refer them for tutorial and other support services. Beginning the third week of the semester, an early alert system begins. The

infent is to begin to identify students who are experiencing academic difficulty as early as possible and to provide them with assistance. Academic advisers in the Center for Academic Advising and Testing serve as the liaison between students and their instructors. In addition, the Division of Academic Affairs and the Division of Student Affairs have continued to collaborate in developing an effective mentoring program.

The success of Old Westbury's retention initiatives is measurable in terms of the cognitive dimensions that manifest themselves in students' ability to complete more units of college credit successfully, earn a higher grade point average, and show a higher persistence rate. Concomitantly, the effective dimensions of success are evident in students' strength and self esteem, increased sense of control, ability to set realistic goals, ability to overcome negative perceptions about prior education, and acceptance of responsibility for learning and success.

State University of New York, College at Oswego

Oswego, New York

Oswego has worked hard on student retention, and has a good record to show for their efforts. Our belief is that retention is the outcome of a variety of efforts as well as a product of successful learning and living experiences of students. Retention programs begin with student recruitment and continue through graduation.

There are six main components to the college retention strategy: strong administrative support, the presence of a comprehensive data base, including a student information tracking system, collaborative linkage between academic and student affairs, the presence of a university-wide committee that keeps attention focused on enrollment management, specific programs designed to support student learning and living experiences, and recognition of student differences in ethnicity, learning skills and needs.

The Enrollment Management Planning Committee makes recommendations to the president regarding retention concerns. Committee members include individuals representing a variety of academic and student service areas. A recent addition to this program is that each individual academic department has responsibility to monitor and manage its enrollment and retention.

The college's ability to monitor enrollment and retention is enhanced by a comprehensive, integrated data base which includes preadmission, demographic and academic progress data. Using a longitudinal student tracking system, the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment routinely provides the college administration with enrollment and retention data and trends. Furthermore, information generated by Institutional Self Studies, Student Learning Assessment, and Quality of Life on Campus Project contributes to the college understanding of student learning and living experience and needs.

The Office of Learning Support Services (OLS) offers admissions and services to students lacking traditional credentials for regular admission. OLS also provides tutoring and other learning support services to students with physical and learning disabilities, non-traditional students and regular admit students who are referred by faculty to OLS for special help. OLS offers a variety of programs and services.

Diagnostic/Placement Examination, Pre-Freshman Summer Program, Freshman Year Experience Course, Reading and Study Skills Development, Special Instruction and Tutoring in Writing and English as a Second Language, Developmental Courses and Tutoring in Math, Peer-Tutoring in all subject areas, Academic and Personal Counseling, Financial Aid to EOP Students, Career and Graduate School Information and Counseling.

A variety of programs such as psychological counseling, freshman orientation, resident hall programs, freshman year experience courses, Student Advisement Center for undeclared majors, and exit interview of withdrawals, are designed to help students understand the purpose of college education, learn about college resources and requirements, explore values and interests, establish supportive relationships with faculty, staff and fellow students. Recognizing the role of student involvement in their learning experience, students are encouraged to participate actively in nearly all departmental and college-wide committees.

Following is an overview of selected diversity initiatives.

- The Institutional Five-Year Plan and Strategic Planning Document include goals for a multicultural community.
- The college's multicultural initiatives are planned and coordinated by a number of institutional committees.
- Programs such as faculty and staff training and general education requirements are developed to increase understanding of multicultural issues.
- Diversification of the human resource composition.
- Special recruitment/admissions efforts targeting people of color/communities.
- A number of support programs are developed to enhance minority student success.
- Minority student success and achievements are recognized through scholarships, luncheons and receptions in honor of the student.
- Student retention, particularly minority student retention, depends upon the students sense of "belonging" or "fit" within the institutional climate. The student services division has designed program goals that encourage both "fit" and interaction.

State University of New York, College at Potsdam

Potsdam, New York

The college is committed to a proactive, successful program of student retention and graduation. The primary campus group charged with working on this issue is the Retention Committee, comprised of faculty, students and staff. The committee examines the effectiveness of retention efforts and proposes programs and services to address any deficiencies. Those recommendations are as follows:

Retention Activities - Academic

An important element in retention success has been the development of a support system to help students develop effective learning skills. There are four mutually supporting components of the program. The first is a three-credit learning skills course which, although open to all students, is targeted at freshmen and transfer students. A second component is a strong peer tutoring program. The third is a Learning Skills Center located in a residence hall. The fourth is a strong emphasis on providing learning skills support for students who are specially admitted to the university.

Evaluation

One of Potsdam's strongest retention components is the evaluation process. The college again participated in the national administration of the ACT Student Opinion Survey. Additionally, the Office of Residence Life conducted a Quality of Life survey for the residential population. Exit interviews with students who have decided to withdraw from the college are a part of the program. All these data are used to evaluate and improve programs that are intended to serve students.

Tracking

Potsdam's retention tracking systems focus primarily on the review of longitudinal data. Data collected over nine years allows for the identification of areas of concern and success. Surveys include information associated with demographics, reasons why students chose the college, and their plans for the future.

Recommendations for Retention Strategies

It is recommended that efforts to improve the advising system must be substantial and include a reward system and comprehensive involvement and training of faculty from all schools. A sound, developmentally-oriented advising program which would contribute greatly to student retention efforts requires recognition, rewards and time.

It is also recommended that an advising system is one that meets the needs of the entire college community. It requires effective tutoring, learning to learn, and other academic support services, stronger support systems for an increasingly diverse population of students, faculty and staff, and a focus on efforts to gather and analyze data to assess areas of concern and strength.

It is finally recommended that efforts be made to streamline financial services. The cost of higher education and related financial services influence retention.

The Richard Stockton College of New Jersey

Pomona, New Jersey

Stockton College has a number of programs and practices that contribute to its progress in retention. The programs listed below can be divided between primarily academic and primarily non-academic programs, with the exception of one which is really both.

Summer Orientation

Stockton has summer orientation programs for both new freshmen (defined as including transfers with fewer than 16 credits) and new transfer students. The most important features in these programs are that they are one-day programs of small group activities. Training sessions are mandatory for all group leaders and families are invited to activities.

Safety and other important issues as well as interest in students are very important factors in the implementation of this program.

Academic Programs

General Features of the College. Stockton College has small classes, variety and options in class scheduling, accessible and student-oriented faculty, a commitment to technological advancement, as well as faculty vitality enhanced by various programs.

Academic Advising. The availability of faculty for consultation is an important feature, as is cancellation of classes two days each term before pre-registration to assure time for student meetings with specially-assigned faculty advisors. There is also assignment of students to advisors who are trained to address the special needs of freshmen.

Freshman Seminars. These seminars, (credit-bearing) academic content courses, are required for all new freshmen in the first semester. Classes are seminar-sized with heavy emphasis on discussions and student responsibility. For students whose basic skills test results place them in required "Readings" courses, that is their freshman seminar, other students can choose from offerings in arts and humanities, natural sciences, and social sciences. For students who register at summer orientation, their seminar instructor is also assigned as their freshman preceptor so as to increase the likelihood of forming a close connection.

Mentor-Scholar Program. This program is offered particularly to strong incoming freshmen upon admission and connects the student to a faculty member in the student's area of academic interest for independent study during the freshman year.

Articulation Programs. These programs are negotiated with a range of graduate and professional schools and include medical and related fields. The program allows students to start a professional school before completing an undergraduate degree. These programs also enhance attention to and retention of top students by outlining a clear track to post-graduate study.

Non-Academic Programs

Housing. Stockton is the most residential of the New Jersey state colleges. Among its features are an 80 percent increase in beds, construction of two activities centers and a guarantee of housing for incoming freshmen.

Undergraduate Learning, Training and Awareness (ULTRA). This program consists of workshops and other activities relating to personal development, training in such areas as CPR, leadership development, alcohol/substance abuse awareness, smoking cessation, as well as awareness of intercultural issues.

Minority Retention

Retention rates for black students are almost identical to those for white students. The reasons include:

- ULTRA and other Student Services programs and workshops on multiculturalism, interracial relationships and other themes.

- Sponsorship of the Human Relations Coalition, a collaboration of the college and off–campus groups committed to improving inter-group relations.
- The Holocaust Resource Center
- Conspicuous leadership in both administration and faculty by minority individuals who can serve as role models

Stockton College has been strikingly successful at retaining minority students; the implementation of the programs described above is the main reason for the college's success.

Towson State University

Towson, Maryland

Academic Advising

Towson State University has several academic advising initiatives that are directed toward improving retention. These initiatives have been driven by the concept that academic advising is an extension of the university's teaching mission. Through the use of this teaching model of advising, the university has been able to develop interactive and productive group and individual advising that views advising as a shared responsibility between student and advisor. The processes are intended to help students make better decisions rather than make decisions for them. University initiatives include mandatory advising, supplemental advising, peer advising, and a process for self-tracking.

Mandatory advising was instituted for all students in the fall of 1987. Since that time, all students with a declared major have an advisor within the major department. Both one-on-one and group advising is conducted. Students who have not yet declared a major are advised by faculty members in the core liberal arts and sciences departments.

Professional, non-academic advisors support faculty advising efforts. These individuals staff the University Academic Advising Center, which serves as a clearinghouse of information on university policies and procedures. Advisors assist students in the processes of evaluating their progress toward degree completion, appealing to the Academic Standards Committee for exceptions and waivers, and withdrawing from the university. Special advising sessions for at-risk students are scheduled regularly and by appointment. Additionally, the UAAC staff conducts a junior audit for each student as soon as the student has completed 75 credit hours. This audit is for use by the student and his or her academic advisor. Since the institution of this audit, the number of students whose graduation applications have been declined because of deficiencies in completing requirements has declined markedly.

A successful new advising initiative is the creation of a corps of trained Student Academic Advisors who, under the motto of "Students Helping Students," work in the University Academic Advising Center. They answer frequently asked questions about academic rules and regulations and assist students to prepare for sessions with faculty advisors. Student Academic Advisors insure that time-sensitive information is printed weekly in the student newspaper, distribute advising worksheets and guidelines to students enrolled in introductory composition courses, and serve as advocates for undergraduates by suggesting ways to make the catalog and other materials more useful.

Since fall 1993, all students have been able to use Access, a computer system that permits them to access their own transcripts and course schedules, check course availabilities, and print checklists of the general university requirements. Further, the student can use the junior audit as a self-monitoring device.

Institution-Wide Outreach/Orientation

The university uses a variety of vehicles to promote university-wide outreach and orientation to assist students make the most of their collegiate experience.

Begun six years ago to assist new freshmen, the annual Exploration Day has become a major campus event. Jointly sponsored by units of the academic, student affairs and business and finance divisions of the university, Exploration '93 consisted of six "fairs" — the Student Activity Fair, Volunteer Fair, Part-time Jobs Fair, Academic Fair, Health Fair, and Recreation Fair. The day permits students to explore links between the academic and co-curricular aspects of the university.

The Catalyst Theater is a social issues, interactive theater group which appears at numerous campus activities and helps members of the campus community reconsider attitudes toward race, sexual orientation, alcohol and drug use, and other issues that affect student adjustment to university life.

The Alcohol Intervention Program seeks to help the student deal with alcohol abuse while continuing his or her education. Rather than suspending students for alcohol-related problems, the university requires mandatory attendance in this on-campus alcohol program. The success rate has been high.

Service learning opportunities are an important part of the university's programs. Project Marj is an outdoor wilderness experience through which new students build a community of interdependent people. Similar to "outward bound" programs, it is an orientation supplement. A less strenuous parallel to Project Marj is The Murder Mystery. In the process of solving a fictitious murder of a member of the campus community, students get acquainted with one another and with the university's offices and personnel. Work with local Habitat for Humanity groups is offered to students as an important service learning opportunity.

Programs for Specific Populations

The university has several programs for specific populations. Included in these are programs for African American students, such as special orientation meetings for newly-admitted students and parents, a Black Scholars Program which presents distinguished African American scholars who give lectures and class sessions, the Students Achieve Goals through Education Program (SAGE) which focuses on entering minority students, and Assisting Incoming Minority Students (AIMS) which features student mentors and facilitators who work with the SAGE orientation program.

The university also has developed programs to work with student athletes to help ensure their academic progress, with students with disabilities through supplemental advising services, with international students who are non-native English speakers, and with honors students through the Honors College and other special recognitions. The university has established a Task Force on Gay, Lesbian and Bisexual Concerns in an effort to make the campus environment more hospitable to all students.

University of Guam

Mangilao, Guerrero, Guam

The University of Guam serves students from all the island countries of the western Pacific as well as from the various Asian countries. The students, many of whom are in the process of learning English as a second language, exhibit varying degrees of academic preparation. As a result, student retention is a top priority. Although efforts have been spearheaded by the president, retention, an on-going concern, is also the responsibility of everyone on the faculty and in the administration. Retention efforts are enhanced by generous local financial aid in addition to the federally-aided programs.

The university's retention success results from its ability to provide individualized attention to the needs of students, and from faculty and administrators who possess cultural sensitivity. A tracking system facilitates early intervention for at-risk students. The university provides load allocations to faculty to study student success rates and the effectiveness of academic efforts. Developmental programs are given a large share of the academic budget. They are staffed with senior faculty. Student counseling and student affairs are not just collateral services, but are essential to the student's academic success and to retention efforts.

The university has instituted outreach programs and on-island symposia, where members of the university go into the community and to the islands of Micronesia to make presentations about higher education to prospective applicants. They also cooperate with regional educators in providing effective college preparatory programs in their schools.

A university-wide committee monitors orientation and advisement programs. Various tutorial programs will be consolidated into a comprehensive across-the-curriculum learning center. Recognizing that the student's sense of community and belonging is essential to retention, the university encourages the establishment of student organizations for the various ethnic groups that make up the student population.

University of Memphis

Memphis, Tennessee

The University of Memphis' commitment to quality education is reflected in the programs and services offered. These include courses in general education, the majors and any academic enhancements needed, including those for students on academic probation.

All Educational Support Program (ESP) staff and tutors are provided information and professional development on topics of diversity—cultural and learning styles—and instructional strategies. Issues of cultural sensitivity, awareness of differences and value of diversity are topics for discussions, modeling and observations.

The staff and scholarship tutors in each of the ESP learning centers are representative of the diversity of the student body. There are six learning centers strategically located on the campus to meet the needs of the students, offering free classes, workshops and seminars during regular and extended hours. The focus is on knowledge of the curriculum content, understanding and awareness of faculty

expectations and specific writing-across-the-curriculum requirements.

Networking is encouraged through the ESP Scholarship Tutor Core in the following ways: the buddy system (new scholarship students are contacted by tutor core members); a grapevine information system (peer support based on classroom experiences and with specific professors); formal and informal tutor-led study groups; involvement with peers and upperclassmen who are in the same majors; and recruitment and public relations activities on the campus and in metropolitan elementary and secondary schools.

Black Scholars Unlimited is an honor society which involves high ability students in cultural and academic activities that will assist them in developing career and academic goals. This organization enhances the academic experience by promoting scholarship, leadership and service. Faculty and students are mutually supportive and encourage one another to achieve excellence in all their academic, career and service pursuits.

In the mentor program, faculty and staff assist members of Black Scholars Unlimited to develop academic and career goals and to nurture closer relationships among faculty and students. The Annual Black Scholars Unlimited Scholarship Breakfast honors and recognizes all black university-wide scholarship recipients and includes their families and ministers. The Black Scholars Unlimited Study Table, held once a week, is an opportunity for students to study together away from distractions.

The Developmental Workshops offer topics such as career development, post-graduation study and test preparation. The workshops help students prepare for further study and the professional world after graduation.

University of Nebraska at Kearney

Kearney, Nebraska

The most successful retention strategy at the University of Nebraska at Kearney has been that of providing a high quality educational experience. The institution's primary goal has been to provide the best possible educational experience for students, both inside and outside the classroom.

UNK experienced substantial enrollment growth in the 1980s; then the decline in freshman class enrollment in the 1990s was attributed to the declining number of students graduating from Nebraska high schools. UNK then began a more concerted effort to study retention.

There are currently a number of retention-related initiatives underway at UNK. These efforts involve gathering data and increasing the institution's understanding regarding the reasons students stay or leave the university. Specific attention is being focused on conditionally admitted students, enhancement of academic advising, and development of new systems to coordinate retention efforts.

The various retention efforts currently underway at UNK take the form of a Student Information System, a Learning Skills Center/University Foundations Courses, Academic Advising Task Force, a Pilot Retention Program, and TRIO/Student Support Services.

Student Information System

The Student Information System has been in use since the 1990-1991 academic year. This system has allowed the university to track the number of students who leave during and at the end of each semester. The availability of this type of information has helped the university to confirm that not all students who leave are academically unsuccessful. Slightly more than half of these students have GPA's above 2.0. According to the records, academically successful students who leave do so because they are generally unhappy and not personally satisfied. They are unsure of their purpose for being in college, and in some cases, personal issues make it difficult for them to continue to attend. Others leave to pursue a new and different course of study at another institution.

This system also tracks data such as the number of students enrolled in specific degree programs and in specific courses within those programs. Keeping these records allows reporting to college deans regarding enrollment trends in their areas.

Learning Skills Center/University Foundations Courses

This center offers a "University Foundations" course which is taught by student affairs staff members. Enrollment in the course is open and all new students at UNK are encouraged to enroll. The course covers adjustment to college life, and gives students the knowledge and confidence they need to succeed at UNK.

Among the skills taught are time and money management and students are required to attend activities on campus and special interest lectures. Also in this case, records indicate that new students who successfully completed a university foundations course have a higher retention level than those who do not.

Academic Advising Task Force

This task force has been created to evaluate the advising process. Its membership includes representatives from all areas of the university community. Initial efforts have included two surveys designed to gauge the quality of academic advising available to students.

A faculty survey asked for input regarding the purpose, goals, organization, selection and training involved with current academic advising practices. The results of both faculty and student surveys, are currently being compiled and analyzed in order that new ways of strengthening and improving the academic advising program may be identified.

Pilot Retention Program

A pilot retention project has been organized within the past year by a team of faculty and student affairs staff members. The program provided mentoring and advising activities to help "connect" students to the institution.

The team identified two criteria as indicators of retention risk.

- students who identified themselves as first generation college students.
- students who had composite ACT scores of 20 or below.

The project team had 20 responses to the invitation to participate in the pilot program. While the results of the project are encouraging, the team members were not convinced that the project made a difference. They however believed that many of the participants were successful because of their personal desire to succeed.

TRIO/Student Support Services

During the period of the pilot retention project's development, UNK was also awarded a TRIO grant by the Department of Education for creation of a Student Support Services program. Student eligibility for the program was based on being a first generation college student with academic need.

Members of the retention project team assisted the director of the Student Support Services program in developing the new program by using findings from the pilot project. Also, students who had participated in the pilot program met with the director of Student Support Services program, to offer advice on developing activities which would appeal to students.

Future Plans and Efforts

The next step in UNK's retention efforts will involve coordination of the various efforts currently underway. Certainly, the pilot retention project was the beginning of that kind of coordinated effort. Examination of the above programs raises questions regarding the "comprehensiveness" of current retention efforts, and the need for a coordinating master plan. These topics will be investigated over the next several years, as improvements in retention efforts play an increasingly integral part in UNK's enrollment management plan.

University of North Florida

Jacksonville, Florida

The university, committed to the retention and successful graduation of students, has developed numerous retention strategies across the campus in administrative and academic units. Those efforts include:

Admissions and Financial Assistance

The President's Office and the Division of Academic Affairs ensure sufficient financial aid opportunities and participate in numerous recruitment and admissions efforts. Special focus and opportunities are afforded minority students.

Academic Advising

Specific departments have extension efforts in academic advising that address the needs and hopes of ethnically and racially diverse groups. The College of Arts and Sciences conducts extensive academic advising and has a special program entitled Boosting Education Awareness of Minorities (BEAM). The College of Business Administration has programs entitled INROADS and College Awareness for pre-college counseling, a Northeast Florida Institute of Science/Math for students and teachers, and specific scholarships for minority students. The College of Education and Human Services supports Teacher Education for America's Minorities (TEAM) and special activities at rural schools.

Student Services

The Division of Student Affairs has numerous focuses on minority students. Its College Reach-Out Consortium address pre-collegiate students, QUEST (Quality for the Ultimate Educational Success Today) works with first-time students, and special summer graduate programs address specific populations. Faculty and staff serve as mentors to first-time and first-time graduate students. Tutoring and

academic and personal counseling opportunities are available to all students. Special programs include the Black Men's Focus Group, Cooperative Education Programs, and College Level Academic Skills Test (CLAST) students.

All these efforts are supported with university funds, private funds, and government and foundation support.

University of Northern Iowa

Cedar Falls, Iowa

The university is committed to the concept that the academic success of a student is accomplished in large part by achieving appropriate matches between the student and the college community. Student persistence, retention and graduation rates increase when students are correctly matched with the appropriate institution, academic counselor, curriculum, faculty, co-curricular activities, mentors, and college culture. Academic Advising Services at the university attempts to facilitate these matches for students.

Academic Advising Service's efforts are imbedded in a philosophical view that holds that the key to student success is the advising service's promotion of academic advising as an educational process. Students are challenged to perform well academically as well as challenged to make appropriate academic choices. Further, students are challenged to examine all of their educational choices through the promotion of critical thinking, research skills, and independent thought. Developmental advising at the university is based on three underlying assumptions: (1) advising is multifaceted and requires a broad support network of faculty, staff and student assistants; (2) every student has the right to an advisor who is responsive to needs; and (3) important to an effective advising process is a professional, helpful atmosphere which challenges students to clarify their educational goals and interrelate all aspects of student life to help them achieve their goals, encourages students to take advantage of all resources and opportunities, and allows students to become informed about educational options and academic policies and procedures.

Academic Advising Services

Professional and peer advisors are available to all students requesting advising assistance, but special attention is given to freshman students who have not selected or are changing a major, and students who have been readmitted to the university. Freshmen with declared majors are assigned to academic departments; all others secure help from Academic Advising Services.

A key feature of the university's advising program is the close ties between residence hall staff and academic advisors services staff. Residence hall coordinators are assigned students to assist; off-campus students are assisted by academic services staff. Coordination, monitoring and evaluation are regular aspects of this endeavor.

Advising services are available to special populations of students, including athletes, nontraditional and international students.

Peer advisors also play a key role in academic advising for freshmen. These advisors help first year students search for resources, identify options and evaluate choices. Academic advising is conducted under the leadership of a reading/learning

strategies specialist. In addition to classes designed to improve study skills and improve reading, individual assistance is provided.

The formal advising system at the university is characterized by an emphasis on decentralization; each academic department has responsibility for its students. Advising is more than an explanation of curricular requirements and includes mentoring, teaching, supporting, counseling and referring.

Advising Freshman Students

While academic advising is ensured for all students, special attention is given to the advising of freshman students. These efforts include summer orientation/registration, individual appointments, analysis and discussion of mid-term grade report notices, fall academic departmental meetings, advisory letters at the end of the first semester, and a Declaration of Curriculum Day in which students formally declare a major.

Survey of Students Who Have Withdrawn

Efforts were made this past year to identify reasons why academically successful students, who indicated an intention of returning to the university through advanced registration, decided to withdraw from classes prior to the beginning of the term. Through use of a questionnaire, information is sought and will be analyzed in an effort to improve the retention and graduation rates for students of the university.

University of South Carolina at Aiken

Aiken, South Carolina

The University of South Carolina at Aiken uses a number of methods to measure and increase student retention. There is presidential and upper-level administrative support for all retention activities and studies.

Orientation and Advising

Orientation is required of all new students, with specific orientation activities for full- and part-time students, parents and spouses.

The university has tightened admission standards and requires prerequisite high school level college preparatory courses. The use of placement tests in writing, mathematics and foreign languages helps ensure proper advising in these areas; developmental courses are required when necessary.

The Office of Academic Advisement oversees an early warning system for students at risk. As a result of this system, there has been an increase in the retention and graduation rates for all students, including minorities and athletes.

Retention Studies

To help monitor the success rate of students and help ensure responsive, effective programs, the university has undertaken an number of studies and initiatives. The Student Migration Studies, a computerized tracking system, notes student progress by major, department and college and compares any two semesters' records of academic mobility and progress. Data on graduation, continuation and withdrawal are reported to appropriate offices and faculty members.

Cohort groups of full-time freshmen are tracked to examine the percentage of students that return for subsequent years, as well as the percentage that graduate or return after absences. Transcript analyses have been performed on selected cohort groups to identify variables that would affect retention and time-to-degree completion.

Annual surveys of students, former students, graduates and employers provide information to guide administrative and academic planning for student services and retention. Special surveys have been done for evening students to explore possible alternative course delivery mechanisms. An Enrollment Planning Task Force has been established to determine additional data that the university should monitor on a regular basis to guide its orientation/advising/retention efforts.

University of Southern Colorado

Pueblo, Colorado

USC's retention efforts continued in the same vein as last year by focusing on creating a student-centered campus. Efforts are directed at student success rather than at retention. However, the view of faculty and staff shifts to retention when discussions about lowering the quality and relaxing standards diminish.

Student Success Plan

The president appointed the full-time position of director of student success to address student success, multiculturalism and partnerships. The Student Success Task Force (SSTF), formerly the Student Retention Committee, examined the retention plans which were developed and submitted as part of the 1992-1993 effort and reviewed the literature to determine critical periods which occur during the academic year in the lives of the students.

The plans of the SSTF were analyzed to determine what the relationship was between the activities outlined in the plans and the critical periods identified in the literature review. This analysis was forwarded back to the departments with a suggested time frame for the implementation of the activities listed in their student success plan. Many plans contained appropriate activities for the students, but many were scheduled after the identified critical time frame. This activity caused various units across the campus to create a student success plan with a time frame that was more relevant to the students' needs. The suggestions did not disregard the activities which had already been developed, but served to reinforce those which had been deemed valuable and provided a rationale for an implementation timetable.

Student Advising

Advising plays a significant role in student success at USC. One of the features of good advising is leading students toward academic success by placing them in the appropriate courses. To this end, an ad hoc committee was established to determine how best to measure proficiency in mathematics and writing. Faculty worked on the development of instruments which could evaluate the performance of entering students in relation to the expectations of the university. In the state of Colorado, four-year institutions are not permitted to offer developmental education courses, a system must therefore be in place to address the needs of underprepared students, once they have been identified. During the coming year, there will be

pilot schemes using the assessment instruments developed by faculty. An agreement has been reached with Pueblo Community College to deliver the remedial coursework needed on USC's campus. Assuming that the pilot schemes are successful, the advisement process will become easier and students will be counseled out of courses which they would normally fail without the prerequisite skills.

Campus-Wide Involvement

The student body of the university is 27 percent ethnic and racial minority. A Multicultural Council has been formed with the president as (self-appointed) administrative representative. The council addresses the integration of culture and gender in the curriculum to create a Center for Ethnic and Gender Studies, and to foster an harmonious atmosphere. This is the first attempt at a campus-wide infusion of diversity.

Also in support of this effort, a Plan for Realizing Institutional Diversity Enhancement (PRIDE) was produced by American Council on Education Fellow Euphemia Williams. This monograph serves as the multiculturalism blueprint for the campus. The president has assigned the responsibility for the implementation of the goals to various members of the university community.

Various other programs including a Staff Student Success Task Force and a Student Success Team were organized to explore the ideas of classified employees as they relate to student success and to focus on individual students who seem to fall through the cracks. The efforts of the task force have created a culture of service in the workplace and there has been a positive reaction from students and staff. The results of the work of the Student Success Team will not be known until after fall registration, but there has so far been positive feedback and contact with team members directly as a follow-up.

A bridge program with Pueblo Community College has been established to provide assistance and advice to transfer students, and the task force is instituting a referral process which will maximize the effectiveness of the Developmental Advising Center and the Learning Assistance Center. These are the focal points for students seeking career counseling or help with a major as well as those needing an Academic Contact Plan (AIP). Part of the AIP may be the assignment of tutors to the students or referral to the writing or math lab.

Learning Communities

During the next orientation period, the director of student success and the director of orientation will be establishing 10 educational communities. Groups of 10 students will be placed in the same courses with a faculty and staff member volunteering to assist each group. Study groups will be formed in addition to having cultural and social events scheduled for them. The effect of these will be monitored to determine if all entering students should be participants. Based upon reports in the literature, there are high expectations for this approach.

Institutional Studies

The experience of the past year has shown that assumptions should not be made about who is being served by the university. By segmenting the market, the institution found that many of the non-returning students from a freshman cohort were actually the better students. Follow-up indicates that many of the cohort transferred to institutions which offered majors in fields which were not available at USC. The data, however, demonstrate that programs could easily be developed for students who are not those most in need of services.

The University of Southern Colorado is committed to the student-centered campus and to student success. There is room for improvement and the success of preliminary efforts cannot be measured until a comparison is made with the persistence rates in the fall. The anecdotal information, however, indicates progress on a number of fronts. The university will continue to strive toward the delivery of quality services to its students by evaluating and improving the points of contact such as admissions, financial aid, student life, etc. With the support of the academic leadership, we anticipate that this will be successful.

University of Texas at Arlington

Arlington, Texas

The University of Texas at Arlington makes advances in student retention by using many campus units and multiple funding sources to maximize its ability to provide support programs to help students fulfill their academic objectives and heighten graduation rates. The various financial resources that underwrite efforts, and a brief outline of those efforts, are:

Student Service Fees

These fees support a comprehensive array of retention activities ranging from academic adjustment and retention-related seminars of the Counseling and Career Development Office to leadership retreats and student organizations of the Student Development Office. One program of note is the Cost Share Tutorial Program, in which students share the expense of tutoring with student fees. A professional counselor, who prescribes plans of action and makes referrals, is assigned to each student. Tutors are upper-level students who are carefully screened and monitored.

Student service fees also support the four retention strategies coordinated by the Office of Multicultural Services: (1) The Center for Multicultural Cooperation, which provides a hospitable environment where computers, meeting rooms and study skills seminars are made available; (2) the Minority Student Mentor Project, through which faculty meet regularly with students with those meetings augmented by contacts with other students; (3) the Targeted Early Alert Monitoring System, which identifies at-risk students and encourages them to take advantage of remedial opportunities; and (4) the Tutoring Program, which provides free tutoring for students with needs.

State Appropriated Funds

These funds support the work of the Financial Aid and Testing Office. One major retention project is the Academic Foundations Program, in which all students who have not declared a major are enrolled. Through faculty advisors and appropriate seminars and courses, student success rates are enhanced.

Tuition

The Counseling and Career Development Office coordinates the College Adjustment Class. All students are encouraged to enroll in this one-hour class; "provisional admission" students are required to do so. The course includes information about campus services, organizations, policies and procedures, and assists with the development of effective study habits and learning-ready attitudes.

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Grants

Federal grant funds have been acquired to support some retention services. A Student Support Services grant from the Department of Education provides free academic support services to qualifying first-generation, low-income, and physically-disabled students. Education funds also support the Ronald E. McNair Post-Baccalaureate Achievement Program to assist low-income, first-generation college students and students underrepresented in graduate programs. Fiscal, academic and personal support is provided such students through the doctoral level.

The School of Nursing has two programs designed to promote retention of culturally diverse (i.e., Hispanic and African American) nursing and pre-nursing students. These funds, also supported by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board Student Services Division, provide mentoring, seminars and enrichment programs.

The university is an active participant in the University of Texas System Alliance for Minority Participation program, supported in part by the National Science Foundation. The project seeks to double the number of successful Hispanic, African American and Native American students in science, engineering and mathematics.

Voluntary Efforts

Perhaps one of the best mechanisms that the university can use to retain students are the volunteer efforts of faculty, staff and students. Informal and formal efforts (in the latter case, the Minority Initiative Program) are found in many places throughout the university, including the School of Social Work and the Graduate School. Volunteers offer tutoring and mentoring assistance in academic, fiscal and personal matters to at-risk students.

University of Texas at El Paso

El Paso, Texas

The University of Texas at El Paso has undertaken several initiatives directed toward student retention and graduation. Those efforts include:

The El Paso Collaborative for Academic Excellence

The collaborative is a community-wide effort to improve academic achievement among all young people in El Paso from kindergarten through college. UTEP, El Paso Community College, school districts, and business and community entities have formed a partnership supporting the goal of keeping students in school and achieving success. Included in the improvement strategies are opportunities for training school personnel, a principal's seminar, a Mathematics Institute for teachers, and an admissions task force to re-examine college entrance requirements.

College of Engineering Programs

The College of Engineering has instituted three programs to help ensure the successful matriculation of students: Freshman Summer Transition Program, Engineering Orientation Course, and Peer Outreach Program.

The Freshman Summer Transition Program brings high school graduates to the campus for a multi-week summer experience designed to increase their success

in their first year of college. Cursory examination of results indicates improved academic performance and more rapid completion of the math sequence.

The Engineering Orientation Course is designed for the non-calculus-ready student. The orientation course integrates opportunities for community building through projects which encourage interaction with faculty, staff and other students. Personal, interpersonal and communication skills are developed to help ensure later success.

The Peer Outreach Program uses upper division students as mentors, recruiters, tutors and facilitators. These students operate the engineering student study center, assist with academic advising, recruit in local high schools, and assist with summer programs. The program, which involves students in both teaching and learning processes, helps develop leadership skills, explores education as a career, and assists with the financing of their education.

Tutoring and Learning Center

The center provides free tutoring to all students from peer tutors. The center has recently instituted the Student Support Services Program, to assist first-time provisional and transfer students adapt to the university setting through services that include tutoring, financial aid workshops, computer classes, personal counseling, study halls, early academic advising, and cultural and social activities. Students are enrolled with a cohort in three or more courses, including a semester-long, non-credit study skills and orientation course. The program is intended to increase student persistence to graduation.

The University of Texas at San Antonio

San Antonio, Texas

The University of Texas at San Antonio has developed a comprehensive series of strategic initiatives aimed at recruiting, retaining and graduating a diverse student body and providing a quality education in an environment that fosters student success. These initiatives and the activities that proceed from them are clustered under the UTSA Enrollment Management and Student Success program, which is directed by a council that represents both the academic and the student affairs elements of the university.

Enhanced Recruitment

One major part of the program is an enhanced recruitment effort, particularly directed toward areas of San Antonio and the Rio Grande Valley with high proportions of ethnic minority high school graduates. (UTSA's minority student population—primarily Hispanic—has increased rapidly in the last four years and now stands above 40 percent of the total student body. The university's ultimate aim is to achieve a student body that mirrors in its diversity the population of the San Antonio area, about 60 percent minority. The recruiting effort is tied closely to an integrated process of student orientation (now mandatory for all freshmen), placement testing, academic advising, referral to student support services, and participation in Freshman Year Program activities. The various parts of the process are administered by separate units of academic affairs and student affairs, but they are coordinated through a continuing series of planning and liaison meetings sponsored by the Enrollment Management and Student Success Council.

Tomas Rivera Center for Student Advising

A major improvement in UTSA's efforts to enhance retention and promote student success was realized in January 1994 when the restructured Tomas Rivera Center for Student Advising opened. This center incorporates within one unit—jointly managed by Academic Affairs and Student Affairs—facilities for mandatory advising of all entering undergraduates with fewer than 30 semester hours of credit and for supplying a wide range of learning assistance and remedial resources. Entering students receive accurate advice about academic programs and course of study and are referred to learning assistance services as needed on the basis of placement testing, advisor evaluation, and self-assessment. The latter services are also available to students after they have acquired 30 credit hours and are transferred for advising purposes to the degree programs. The center has recruited faculty with appropriate expertise to develop a comprehensive cognitive skills development program available in a variety of modules.

A number of university programs have been incorporated into the student retention planning process. Among these is the University Honors Program, which is pursuing a strategic initiative to enhance the recruitment and retention of highly capable minority students by affording them opportunities for educational experiences as interesting and challenging as those to be found at public universities anywhere else in the country. The office of Institutional Analysis is undertaking a project to develop sophisticated definitions and measures of retention that could be used more effectively than current ones for planning, budgetary and assessment purposes.

UTSA has recently developed and implemented an automated on-line degree-check system called DAAS (Degree Audit and Advising System); this system will serve as the core of an advising-support system in the Tomas Rivera Center and in the four colleges of the university, and of a tracking system which can be used for analysis and assessment purposes.

Link with Area Community Colleges

A vital part of UTSA's retention effort centers around the relationship between the university and the three community colleges in San Antonio which are the main sources of students transferring to UTSA. The new core curriculum and a degree program for prospective elementary school teachers were developed in conjunction with the community colleges so that all of the courses taken in these programs will transfer to UTSA. In this way, students will not be discouraged from completing degrees at UTSA because of large numbers of transferable courses or courses that transfer only as electives.

University of Wisconsin-Green Bay

Green Bay, Wisconsin

The university is the newest in the Wisconsin system, founded in 1968, and has about 5,400 students. The campus has had a predominantly commuter population, currently about 30 percent of the students live on campus. The institution has long focused on improving its retention efforts through a wide variety of programs, activities and tracking efforts. While many programs have individually been quite successful, there has been, to date, no centralized office or program that has embraced and coordinated all of the campus retention programs and activities. A

major consolidation and administrative restructuring is underway to bring greater focus and coordination to these efforts by aligning all recruitment, retention and student affairs under a single senior administrator. Additionally, a Recruitment and Retention Steering Committee has been proposed to provide overview, coordination and accountability to the activities relating to recruitment and retention, with special emphasis on support students from diverse cultural heritages. The institution recognizes the needs of special populations and has provided special attention through support programs and centers for international students, students of color, women and returning adult students. Services that touch the lives of all students, with special emphasis on retention and support, include the following.

Recruitment and Admission

The recruitment program provides information and opportunities for students to learn about the campus before enrolling. The institution provides four campus preview days and schedules hundreds of individual visits to help ensure a proper "fit and feel" for students on the campus.

Admissions standards have increased to ensure that students admitted have the ability to succeed. School record, class standings, test scores, personal circumstances and individualized admissions testing occur. Students determined to be "at risk" or who need special support are identified for admission to the Educational Opportunity Program (EOP) or the Conditional Admission Program. Such admission gives a student one year to meet specific requirements. During that year, there is an extensive program of tutoring, advising, skill learning courses and course limitations.

Orientation and Advising

The orientation program involves students and parents in a one day program that introduces the college experience, offers advice on handling difficult situations, and introduces available supportive services. Orientation continues during the first weeks of the academic year with special student life programs, organizational meetings and workshops. "Intro to College" courses are offered to entering freshmen during the week prior to the start of the academic year or during the first eight weeks of the semester. These credit courses teach study skills, assist students in getting acquainted, and disseminate information about university programs and services.

Student Support Programs

For a variety of groups, special support programs are provided to augment the usual campuswide programs in career advising and placement, student counseling, health services, student financial aid, and the like. These special programs include tutoring by peers and staff, the Athletic Study Table, the Writing Center, Adult Student Services, English as a Second Language Program, American Intercultural Center, the Women's Center, the International Student Center, and the Office for Students with Disabilities.

Campus Life and Activities

Getting students involved and active is a key emphasis for retention and identity with the university. A variety of activities, designed to encourage this, include "Org Smorg" to help students learn of social activities on campus, residence life activities, recognition programs, career and vocational counseling, and programs in wellness, sexuality, drug abuse, problem solving, and campus adjustment.

Assessment and Tracking

The university has an excellent assessment and tracking system in place to study student progress, retention, graduation rates, and related matters. The data help ensure responsive and responsible programs to help students.

Other Academic Retention Programs and Services

The faculty has a strong reputation for accessibility and assistance. The academic programs encourage success, since students must take courses in other cultures and ethnic studies and must have writing experiences. New faculty-student mentoring programs have begun. Even so, the university has a strong interest in developing better coordination of this wide array of programs aimed at strengthening student retention.

General academic advising for the first 36 credits is provided by the Office of Academic Advising; thereafter students meet with faculty advisors. Once a student earns 62 credits, an academic plan must be developed and filed, listing the courses that the student plans to take to meet with requirements for a degree.

University of Wisconsin-Stout

Menomonie, Wisconsin

The University of Wisconsin - Stout's commitment to keeping its high-quality student body is reflected in a 70 percent retention rate for first-year students. Students stay at the university because it offers an appealing array of specialized career-oriented majors, because they receive early involvement in courses related to these majors, and because there is a highly accessible faculty and support staff. Other appealing factors include an abundance of career-based student organizations, excellent specialized student support programs and an extremely high placement rate. The university stresses hands-on, minds-on education in a congenial campus environment at this special mission institution.

Students are encouraged to achieve their full potential. At the same time, the university continues to improve its undergraduate education program with new initiatives related to areas such as advisement, a student honors program and a writing-across-the-curriculum program. Admission standards have been raised and the number of credits required for graduation have been reduced. New student orientation has been refined and course backlogs trimmed.

Many of these improvements were spurred by a plenitude of data, kept accurate and current. For example, there are computerized monitoring systems to track overall student retention and minority enrollment. Annual one-year and three-year follow-up studies of students and employers provide data used to improve curriculum and services.

West Liberty State College

West Liberty, West Virginia

Student retention has for many years been one of the primary concerns at West Liberty State College. However, in 1990, retention became more critical. Other successful colleges were taking the initiative and demonstrating actions to ensure

that students became involved and committed to their institutions, thereby increasing their persistence to graduation.

The college routinely measures overall retention rates through each succeeding year; this has been expanded to tracking retention rates by major. There can be unique factors within a particular major field that may affect retention such as a particularly difficult required course or scheduling of required courses. These types of retention concerns have now been identified and are being handled by the faculty and administrators in the academic discipline. Improving retention in any student category—traditional freshmen, transfer students, or nontraditional students—requires unique solutions. Therefore, West Liberty State College does not focus on just one retention intervention technique or program.

The institution has established a college-wide enrollment management committee as the cornerstone of its student retention program. The committee includes prominent members of the college administration including the president, director of admissions, dean of students, business manager, and counseling staff. Meetings are held monthly, and all areas of the college and campus activities that affect enrollment, including retention, are discussed. The president serves as committee chair, and there is campus-wide representation on the committee. Through the president's strong, active leadership, this committee has developed a multi-faceted strategic plan to increase student retention.

Research demonstrates that student retention and performance improve when students participate in carefully designed and well presented student success courses. Therefore, West Liberty has just established a freshman experience course designed to provide skills and information to enhance students' chances of staying in college and to provide an opportunity to learn and develop techniques that will promote their future success and build self-esteem. The course will be a college-wide, one credit hour, full semester, general studies requirement for all freshmen. On-going program assessment and evaluation are an integral part of the program and its success can be readily quantified through such information as usage rates of the tutoring center, counseling center, library, etc. There is to be no ownership of the course by any one individual, department or school; it is coordinated by the office of the vice-president for academic affairs which demonstrates the top-level commitment that the institution gives to the success of its students.

The college has simultaneously established a developmental studies and freshman placement program to help ensure that students are adequately placed in freshman English composition and mathematics. ACT and SAT minimum cutoff scores have been established below which students must first enroll in a developmental course before proceeding in English or mathematics.

The fall orientation program for incoming freshmen has been extended to a three-day program, conducted in small group format, and led by peer co-leaders who are upper-class students. Although the benefits of this orientation are difficult to quantify, it has nonetheless demonstrated its impact on the retention of freshmen particularly during the critical first few days of the academic year. The college has recently instituted similar orientation programs specifically to accommodate the unique concerns of transfer students. Transfer enrollment has continued to increase each year and orientation programs have now been established for both fall and spring semester transfer students. Programs such as these are intended to help alleviate any questions or problems that might affect transfer student retention.

The tutoring service is another significant facet of the campus retention effort. these individual tutoring programs are offered at no cost to students, and in all subjects offered by the college up to a maximum 25 hours per subject per semester

A minority affairs coordinator was appointed to help improve the retention rate for minority students at West Liberty. This coordinator works directly with individual students and in campus-wide efforts to sensitize the campus community to specific needs of minority students. As a result, the college's minority enrollment has increased by some 40 percent since 1990, and absolute numbers appear to be moving in a very positive direction.

The Regents Bachelor of Arts degree program is a nontraditional program at West Liberty State College for adults who are interested in obtaining a bachelor's degree. The program is tailored to fit the needs of a large number of students who have completed some previous college but have dropped out and not completed their degree. Through this program, older and nontraditional students are attracted back to campus to pursue completion of baccalaureate degrees.

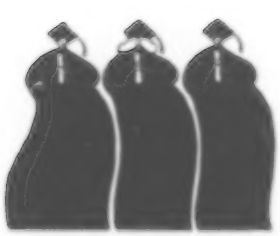
Various departments on campus have instituted their own retention efforts. One example is the School of Education and Human Resource programs for student retention. The advisors in the School of Education work very closely with each student to monitor progress towards the degree and identify problems early. Their retention policy is contained in the student policy manual of the department of professional education. This manual is given to each education major and provides information on the exact retention requirements and time lines for teacher education students. At the completion of each semester, the department of professional education receives a computer printout of grades for all students enrolled in the college. The students' academic advisors also receive copies of grades and work very closely in monitoring student progress.

The collective results of all these student retention efforts under the auspices of the enrollment management committee have significantly contributed to increased overall college retention rates. West Liberty currently enjoys a 71 percent retention rate from the freshman to the sophomore class and an ultimate six year graduation rate for each freshman class of 42 percent. These figures place the college among the very top four-year public institutions of higher education in the state of West Virginia.

Western Michigan University

Kalamazoo, Michigan

At Western Michigan University the University Retention Committee, comprised of faculty and staff from key academic and student affairs units, is a standing subcommittee of the Admissions, Financial Aid and Student Affairs Council of the Faculty Senate. This committee coordinates college/department retention-related activities and strengthens communication links among all members of the university community concerned with retention.



The University Curriculum, an advising/referral program for undecided students, has improved the retention rate for high-risk students. The Freshman Seminar, a college success course, is taught by volunteers from all areas of the university, including the president. Other retention committee initiatives include mandatory orientation for freshmen and freshman-level transfer students, the

Students Taking Advantage of Resources Program (STAR) for minority freshmen, a year-long Spirit Program, and an exit interview for graduating seniors, which supplements the tri-annual student needs assessment.

The Academic Skills Center provides supplemental instruction each semester in several high-risk courses, such as chemistry, electrical engineering, geology, mathematics and biology. The center also offers programs in study skills, mathematical skills, critical reading, problem solving and reasoning skills. The Writing Lab offers tutorials to students, including many international students referred by faculty or self-referred. The Intellectual Skills Program assesses the reading, writing and mathematical skills of all entering students and provides courses and skills center workshops for students who need extra help.

Self-Enhancement Services (SES) provide individualized peer support services to promote the retention and graduation of WMU students. SES' Peer Academic Support Services helps students use time management skills and apply effective course-specific study strategies. SES' Peer Advising Services helps students focus on life goals, career choices and academic majors as well as promotes their knowledge and use of other institutional resources. SES' Peer Support Network provides an informal group setting where students can share information about college life experiences and support each other in managing college life difficulties. At-risk minority students are given priority for the receipt of SES' services.

Recognizing that high ability students can also have retention problems, the Lee Honors College provides a Community of Learners model which integrates all aspects of honors students' lives. Honors classes and activities are held in the college's building, but the college staff and programming also move to the honors residence hall. Honors students are involved in college governance, newsletter production and recruitment.

The Office of Institutional Research provides comprehensive data summaries for freshman-to-sophomore retention rates on several variables: cohort tracking for freshmen and transfer groups, surveys of non-returning students and comparative analyses of retention rates for enrolled students. The registrar's semester production of curriculum preference lists and probation lists are invaluable to the early intervention programming of academic advising offices.

Westfield State College

Westfield, Massachusetts

Westfield State College's mission emphasizes learning in a supportive environment that encourages student involvement in the life of the college and the community. A principal strategy of the institution's retention efforts is to insure that all students know how to access needed services and take advantage of opportunities.

Admission and recruitment operations strive to present an accurate, informative picture of not only the academic programs, but also the social and extracurricular programs. A comprehensive multi-day orientation program is presented to all new students prior to the beginning of classes to familiarize them with academic and extracurricular services and opportunities. This builds cohesiveness and connections among students, faculty and staff. Peer orientation leaders also maintain informal contacts with students during the first year.

Special support services are available to educationally disadvantaged and learning disabled students. They participate in a five-week summer bridge program focusing on goal clarification, setting academic expectations and developing necessary academic and study skills. Regular counseling, tutoring and skill development classes are offered during the academic year.

While faculty are the first-line in the college's retention efforts, especially in their roles as academic advisors, the Academic Achievement Center provides special support to students who are in academic difficulty or who are uncertain about their choices of academic majors. The center is also a resource and back-up for students who seek additional assistance beyond that provided by their faculty advisors.

Wright State University

Dayton, Ohio

Wright State University is a large, metropolitan university which attempts to foster a learning environment that nurtures innovative teaching and active learning, and that provides the intellectual and social wherewithal to give each student the opportunity to succeed. To these ends, an enrollment management task force was charged with recommending new and/or revised programs and services that were most responsive to those goals. The following retention efforts have been implemented.

Institutional Services and Programs

In an effort to serve all students most effectively, the institution implemented a fall faculty retreat to emphasize the university's retention goals, created the University Center for Teaching and Learning, which offers workshops addressing students' learning styles, assessment, portfolio development, classroom management, multiculturalism in the classroom, and other pertinent topics, developed the University Scholarship Council and a more coordinated and effective scholarship program, expanded university housing, developed a student tracking system, created a development block of courses in math, English and reading, expanded the freshman seminar to orient students to the university and provide them with student success strategies, implemented a process for direct admission of academically talented students into specific colleges, developed supplemental instruction in "at-risk" general education courses, implemented a pre-quarter freshman composition workshop, developed a mentoring program which pairs faculty and staff with new freshmen, created the Wright Math Enrichment Program, designed to assist high-achieving, minority students who are planning careers in business, math, science or engineering, and developed writing across the curriculum, a new voluntary program requiring writing intensive courses.

Initiatives for Specific Groups

In an effort to reach specific groups, the university created the Office of Multicultural Affairs which offers programs for all ethnic groups while focusing on retention of African American students. Similarly, it initiated a WSU Parents Group and newsletter. The university recently created a Center for Women's Studies. A Residential Community Faculty Program, an African American Resident Caucus, the

Honors Residence Hall, and C H O I C E (Choosing Healthy Options in a College Environment) were instituted for campus residents.

Collegiate Efforts

Specific colleges within the university have begun programs to enhance retention and graduation. The College of Business sponsors the Black Business Students' Association, is developing a course on multiculturalism and diversity, and offers supplemental instruction to basic courses. The College of Engineering and Computer Science participates in the "Direct Admit Program," has established a peer mentoring program, and sponsors workshops, classes and seminars. The School of Nursing's SMART Program won the 1994 National Student Nurses Association award for Best Retention Project. SMART promotes student accountability and self responsibility, facilitates student networking and peer mentoring, enhances appreciation of diverse cultures, and encourages underrepresented students and alumni involvement. The College of Science and Mathematics has hired an assistant dean to work in retention and supports numerous programs. The Schools of Medicine and Professional Psychology have nationally recognized student retention programs. The College of Liberal Arts holds focus group meetings, participates in writing across the campus, and emphasizes the use of multimedia technology in the classroom. The College of Education and Human Services provides guidebooks to assist students and is currently revising its entire curriculum to better meet the needs of students and the community.

New Initiatives

The university has recently formed a University Retention Team whose task is to set specific retention goals for the university and specific retention goals for each college and department and to ensure that those goals are met. A Campus Climate Council has been charged with addressing racial/ethnic relations, gender relations, sexual orientation, campus morale, disabilities and equal access, and external community relations. An African American Man-to-Man Mentoring Program pairs students with faculty and professional staff to improve retention, success and graduation rates.

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